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ABSTRACT

Latin America is a continent with a great deal of poverty, ignorance, and violence. This book describes the problems that plague the region and explains how and why they have gone unsolved. Change can come about only through real and effective participation by men and women in the political and economic activities of their nations. Organized into 3 parts, this volume contains 16 chapters. Part 1, "Four Concepts Toward Understanding Latin America," features chapters: (1) "Ignorance Is at the Root of Problems"; (2) "Endless Poverty"; (3) "The Devaluation of Development"; and (4) "New Meaning of Revolution." Part 2, "Present-Day Latin America: Indicators and Profile," presents the following chapters: (5) "The Ruling Classes of Latin America"; (6) "A Debt Worth Billions"; (7) "Latin America's Ideological Struggle"; (8) "The Population Explosion"; (9) "Urbanization and Population Overflow in Latin America"; (10) "Mass Communications in Latin America"; (11) "The Utopia of Education"; and (12) "Causes of Causes and Incomplete Solutions." Part 3, "Developing Human Potential--a Door Opens Onto Hope," contains chapters: (13) "Education for Living"; (14) "Criteria for Planned Education"; (15) "Achieving Human Potential"; and (16) "A Political Priority." An epilogue, tables of statistical data, and an 81-item bibliography also are included. (DB)

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Latin America
THE REVOLUTION OF HOPE

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JOSE JOAQUIN SALCEDO G.

Founder and director (1947-1987) of Accion Cultural Popular (ACPO) in Colombia, a pioneer in the development of radiophonic education aimed at rural audiences. It has developed as one of the largest non-formal education programs in the world concerned with improving the quality of life of rural populations. ACPO uses a multimedia approach: radio, textbooks, a book collection, a weekly newspaper, recordings, extension courses, community workers, to offer basic education in areas such as literacy, health, home improvement, agricultural production, civic an community education. The success of ACPO has led to the organization of similar programs in more than 20 other nations.

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Latin America
THE REVOLUTION OF HOPE

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Latin America
THE REVOLUTION OF HOPE

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LA REVOLUCION DE LA ESPERANZA

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"In the soul of the Human Being, created in the image and likeness of God, the sunshine of hope is born at the time of his reason for being and evanesces only upon the instant of his departure.

Every day each person with his mind, his spirituality and his achievement, contributes so that this hope will sprout forth, renewing itself with vigor".

Carmen Montilla Tinoco

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To Violeta Stelling de Alvarez and her most generous son, who have made this endeavor possible, bringing to the people of Latin America some rays of sunshine in their dark tunnel of hopelessness .

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PROLOGUE

Latin America: has it failed? This disturbing thought is foremost in the minds of all those who objectively examine the past and present of this vast conglomerate of lands and peoples.

During almost two centuries since independence, they have been the object of different ideologies, political systems and social concepts. Many explanations have been attempted about their complex makeup, conflicting features of cultural identity and, of course, about their historical accomplishments and errors. Many of these explanations are mere transfers of European political and social doctrines which hardly take into account those peculiar characteristics of a human conglomerate that differs basically from the European in many ways. The history of Latin America could be described as a desperate search for identity, equilibrium, and reconciliation with itself.

In two centuries of Latin American history, the most diverse forms of political organization have been attempted and the most advanced principles of contemporary Europe have been adopted. Yet, a stable, successful and permanent regime has never been achieved on the basis of freedom, growth and progress.

Some search for the roots of this dramatic situation in the profound political, cultural and mental rupture brought about by independence. Because independence from Spain meant total and violent rupture with institutions and values which had prevailed in the region since the dawn of the colonial days. With great enthusiasm for political advancement - but with little or no previous experience or valid historical precedent - most generous institutions were set up emulating models of liberty, equality and representative democracy copied from the period's most advanced countries. A similar process of such basic and sweeping rupture had not taken place elsewhere on the American continent. In the North, given the case of the United States and Canada, there was no such a harsh break with political and social institutions. In fact, the United States adopted institutions founded entirely on an effective precedent: a social contract based on liberty, equality and representative government.

Brazil's case is noteworthy inasmuch as independence was implemented without institutional or social rupture but as a new period within the traditional monarchical system.

The men who accomplished independence soon realized the irreconcilable antinomy between the principles adopted and the social reality of history. Bolivar, for instance, throughout his fighting career attempted to find formulas to conciliate the historical past with the adoption of a republican system based on the models of France or the United States of America. We could also refer to the example of Simon Rodriguez, who spent a lifetime spousing causes, still relevant today, in order to train the people through adequate educational means for the needs and circumstances inherent to a republican form of government. Among other things, he said: "We have yet to arrive at the Republic and we cannot go back to the monarchy", or "if we are to establish the Republic, we must start out by making republicans." His fundamental thought was that, in order for the proclaimed republican institutions to function effectively, a colossal educational task had to be accomplished, first, to endow the entire population with the knowledge and aptitudes which were required to live within a democratic society.

The XIXth century with its record of anarchy and despotic political chieftains is the clearest evidence of this fundamental contradiction which has never been solved.

There were moments when some countries seemed to reach a certain level of institutional maturity assuring them real possibilities of political stability within freedom.

Yet what has happened in Latin America in the last half century has cruelly frustrated such hopes. It is not easy to make a precise and irrefutable diagnosis of causes leading to a situation filled with despair and violence. Latin America's current outlook does not encourage us to regard the present and the future with optimism. The same grave institutional crisis now afflicts different geographic, historical, cultural and social situations.

Immediately after the Second World War, a grand development effort was carried out on an international scale. At that time many thought Latin America would be one of the regions to reap major benefits from this joint enterprise sponsored by the new world powers, and that it would soon show favorable results. This hope never materialized. While in Asia fledgling countries just emerging from colonialism have reached high levels of economic development, Latin America is still struggling through negative and confusing crisis which jeopardizes every phase of its collective existence.

In an attempt to find an answer to such social anguish, a qualified group of specialists has written this book. Its title, "The Revolution of Hope" is both modest and meaningful. I am grateful to its authors for the honor of sending me their manuscript before publication. From a rather quick reading, I have been most favorably impressed. The issues they raise are devoid of self-complacency or ideological arrogance, and emphasize essential facets of the permanent crisis that Latin America has been going through. They have purposely adopted the same vocabulary used in the past to disguise regrettable errors in order to point to what, in their opinion, could be the real and possible revolution, the true change which could be carried out for the common good in this part of the world that is no longer new. What they propose is "real and effective participation and involvement of the people in the life of our nations". At first this might seem an echo of old and discredited demagogic jargon. But as we gradually *explore the substance of the text, we realize this is a much more serious and profound approach. What the authors propose goes beyond a mere change of politics and principles. It seeks "change in human terms... brought about by the participation of each individual who is part of the nation and contributes to its economy". "Popular masses in Latin America don't know how to participate and are unable to do so." Yet, instead of merely proclaiming reachable goals and objectives still to be fully accomplished, the authors of this book point the way and set priorities to do carry out such a task in a rational and possible manner.*

"Ignorance is at the root of most problems". This basic premise is the foundation of this entire exercise. Through adequate education, far-reaching and constructive social policies, it seeks to transform common men and women in Latin America into prime agents of their own progress and welfare. So the authors fittingly return to the arguments so vehemently and clearly expounded by Simon Rodriguez from 1828 onward. This study and its proposals are based on serious and comprehensive information, and when goals are set, they are complemented by feasible and proven methods of implementation.

This is not a flashy work to be used in demagogical speeches nor useless agitation. It is rather a serious plan of action that deliberately avoids political compromise and poses a fresh and profound approach to the great issues of the present and future of Latin America.

Thankful for this opportunity, I would like to leave on record my sincere wishes that this book, devoid of all political purpose, be read and studied by those called upon in any way to make decisions affecting the future of Latin America.

Arturo Uslar Pietri

Caracas, May 1989.

PREFACE

Latin America is a continent in ferment. Social conflict grows every day on an alarming scale. As self-serving interests struggle among themselves, solutions become unreachable and the concept of the common good turns into something alien and misunderstood. This struggle involves ideas, but it also affects reality with alarmingly high, daily quotas of violence, destruction and death. These are political, economic, and ideological battles. The combat zones include the parliaments of our weak democracies and the world of business and trade, as well as city slums, country farmlands and hamlets suddenly terrorized by invading rifles.

At the root of all these struggles, however, we find consensus among different groups: leftists, rightists and those of the center; partisan factions of varying political colors; religious affiliations or free-thinkers; soldiers, clergymen or civilians; old people, businessmen, housewives or students; the rich and the poor; city dwellers or peasants. They all agree solutions must be found in order for **the people to have a better life.**

But when the time for solutions comes around, such unanimity is broken, divisions and conflicts ensue. Then the prevailing motivation revolves around vested interests, be it of groups, classes, political parties, professions, regions, sexes, races and even religions. Their objective is change not for the sake of overall improvement and welfare, but to impose all kinds of contradictory methods of action.

Faced with growing and generalized violence, there is now a second factor which demands unanimity: the **clamor for peace.** Yet such peace has also multiple facets. For some - perhaps the minority - peace is founded on rifles and repression. But for the great majority of the Latin American peoples, peace is attained through social justice, through constant and constructive effort, through solidarity and respect.

However, peace has many enemies. First of all prevailing at the bottom of all conflicts, is the fact that peoples, groups and so-called majorities are unable to reason together and reach meaningful solutions to bring about peace. For peace is the end product of the will and efficient action of the members of any given society. **Peace is not negotiated; it is constructed.**

The second great enemy of peace is the human tendency to seek scapegoats upon whom to blame all problems and evils. This escapist attitude means, in practice, that Latin Americans can shirk responsibilities with a clear conscience, provided they are able to blame all their troubles on **imperialists,** on rival political parties, on other groups, on the rest of humankind. In this way they avoid the least modicum of personal responsibility.

The third enemy of peace is the concentration and centralization of institutions that wield power and the ensuing struggle for the control of these institutions. This means that the democratic concept has only passing expression for the great majorities when they exercise the right to vote on election day.

It is essential for the entire American continent to reflect on these subjects. To analyze the social problems objectively and with serenity. To study the factors involved and determine to what extent each sector has been responsible for the deterioration of the situation. In particular, what responsibilities can be attributed to leaders who are at the root of many of our problems. Thus to clearly point out what roads of hope are still open for our continent to take advantage of the remaining years of this century in order to construct a more humane and acceptable world.

PART ONE

FOUR CONCEPTS TOWARD UNDERSTANDING LATIN AMERICA

CHAPTER I

Ignorance is at the Root of Problems

Reality and Contrasts

Latin America is one of the world's richest regions in natural resources. The Andes Mountains extending all the way from north to south is crowned with peaks and volcanoes, surpassed in height only slightly by the Himalayas, at the so-called "roof of the world". On their foothills and valleys, towns and cities were built and are now densely populated. Some hold the remnants of great civilizations of the past, such as the Incas who reached an advanced culture and powerful political organization. Others display a dynamic modern world of skyscrapers, hectic traffic, noise, movement and commerce.

Besides these mountain ranges, immense prairies extend as far as the eye can see, and lush jungles are criss-crossed by great rivers such as the Amazon, the world's mightiest, which acts as a fabulous generator of oxygen for humanity.

Latin America stretches also to the shores of seas and oceans, boasting tropical beaches of white sand, breath-taking islands and seascapes. Its mines of gold and other precious metals spurred the greed and imagination of the conquistadors. In sum, Latin America has been described by poets as the land of the topaz and the emerald, the alligator and the anaconda.

Such a paradise as might have been described in the first book of Genesis is the home of the Latin American people. More than 450 million of which approximately 80% survive under appalling deficiencies. In fact, many consume just enough calories per day to keep alive. Thus they vegetate; they are unable to live as human beings due to prevailing social conditions. What is even worse, they tend to reproduce indefinitely increasing the number of needy and disabled. This fact renders solutions more and more difficult, and accelerates overall deterioration.

The peoples of Latin America have been ruthless destroyers of their continent. Lacking proper knowledge about technical crop rotation and conservation of natural resources, they have destroyed whole forests, cut down ancient trees, injured the land with their plows, and accelerated the rhythm of erosion as it eats away thousands of tons of topsoil carried on river currents to the depths of the sea. This is how they squander an ecological legacy laboriously amassed by nature through the ages.

Many human conglomerates in Latin America ignore the nature of their own body and are victims of multiple illnesses. They live off the land but do not understand its laws, its components and its value as nurturing mother. Their labors generate some income, yet they do not know how to save and increase it. Ensconced in their limited world, they manage only minimum vocabulary, and thus their intellectual horizons are restricted and their means of communication deficient.

Traditionally, to describe the situation in Latin America, reference is made to the differences between rich and poor. But there is only passing reference to the difference between learned and ignorant, as well as to the great injustices that can be committed through the power of knowledge, unwisely applied. Some rationalize that knowledge empowers them to do as they please and therefore they can rule not only over the world and mother nature, but also over their fellow human beings.

The average Latin American is the object of tremendous injustices because he or she ignore their own value and dignity as human beings. Depositing their fate in those who pretend to be guardians of knowledge and truth, they do not fear multiplying indefinitely, resign themselves to survival on the bare minimum, and waive all rights to new horizons of hope. Because of their mental blindness, they can see no meaning in the immortal words: "To be or not to be."

Furthermore, those who have no knowledge abstain from using the services of those who do possess and manage knowledge. Much of current unemployment cannot be attributed to the lack of trained professionals and technicians, but rather to the fact that substantial masses of the population are unaware of the services such professionals do perform, and therefore cannot solicit or utilize them. It can even be said that trained people are limited in exercising and expanding their particular expertise precisely due to dead weight represented by other peoples' lack of knowledge.

Those who are ignorant express themselves with indolence, apathy, lack of sensitivity, disagreeableness, abulia, feebleness, indifference. Sometimes they cannot escape the state of hypnosis in which they flounder; they appear anesthetized by indifference; they do not wake, nor become active, nor find their true selves; they are limited in choices, have no options, cannot be selective; they do not develop intellectually, for this lacks importance to them; they do not enjoy esthetic pleasures because they are concerned with only instinctive needs.

Ignorance as described here is not limited to reading and writing, using mathematics or being aware of the world's scientific advances, but rather the lack of knowledge of each one's worth as a human person; the inability to see oneself as part of nature and yet different from it, the natural habitat in which we live and must learn to use; the incapacity to reason or be conscious of our moral nature with obligations, respect for the rights of others, and potential for progress. The ignorant are not aware of their own ignorance. They are not only poor intellectually, but they appear doomed to live in misery because, having no knowledge, they cannot discover possible solutions to their plight. This is radical ignorance, the kind that prevails among vast majorities of Latin Americans and a major cause of countless disasters.

There are different forms and levels of ignorance. Supine ignorance of radical lack of knowledge is followed by partial ignorance founded on half-truths. This, instead of clarifying problems at depth, opens false doors and illusory horizons leading to resentment, illusion, or even worse, to hate and despair. Thus, from passive beings, individuals turn aggressive and rebellious against apparent and artificial causes which, in the last instance, do not favor them and instead allow others to manipulate them like marionettes in alien dramas, and use them for fodder in battles not their own.

Half-truths perceived by the ignorant move within a framework of values which supports and justifies them. Great masses motivated by false Messiahs are always waiting for solutions to rain down from above. They fall prey to those who make easy promises because of failure to solve problems through their own efforts. A strong feeling of dependence is created, in turn used by those with knowledge and capacity for action to consolidate their structures of power.

Faced by frustration in finding solutions, anger and unrest ensue among the masses. This in turn spurs the hunt for scapegoats on whom to blame frustrated hopes. Then, within this framework of values, rears its ugly head rationalization in favor of rebellion against power and authority as the only way out of the mess.

Power irritates the ignorant; they resent the chronic contempt displayed by the powerful. They dream and let themselves be doped by the mirage of a society without government.

Unaware of their own value and enormous capacity, the Latin American masses believe that if solutions come from without, the blame must be found there also. This is why they resort to justification and rationalization that create mirages and make ignorance itself grow and multiply.

Latin America has become the land of violence, struggle, and countless daily casualties through guerrilla action, drug traffic, personal vendettas, family quarrels, thousands of children with unknown fathers, broken homes and cruelly battered women.

The reason is the wrong scale of values established and upheld by ignorance.

If persons were conscious of their inherent dignity as human beings, if they discovered how much their intelligence, will and spirit are worth; if they withdrew the veils of ignorance hiding self-esteem; if they overcame religious prejudices and fetishisms, they would find a light that will not be extinguished. Therefore they would stop being easy puppets of ideological interests, unbridled ambitions of power, and alien conspiracies to keep the truth disguised; preventing this region from awakening at last to start playing its proper role on the stage of world history.

Some readers may find disagreeable our insistence on the subject of ignorance. No one likes to be called ignorant. In fact, this word is used everywhere to show pitiless lack of respect or even as an insult. If we accept that ignorance is not in itself evil, but rather in the effects it generates, and that it can be vanquished and overcome provided intelligence is nurtured and adequate education developed, then we shall understand why we must insist on this reality and on how to confront it positively as a first step in a process of improvement of the human person.

The status of ignorance marks a dramatic contrast with the legacy received from nature by the peoples of this continent in its fabulous and varied resources of limitless potential. Without the light of knowledge, it is regrettable that the minds of vast and ever-growing sectors of humanity should remain in the shadows of ignorance.

Shadows and Lights in the Human Mind

Conscious of such contrasts, there is much concern among educators, ideologues, preachers, politicians, and even those who handle mass communications media, to enlighten the human mind and to lead it along the way to hope. What else has been the meaning of ideological struggle in Latin America in the last forty years?

The efforts of numerous educators to enlighten the mind and bring knowledge to all sectors and social conglomerates have been significant and continuous. Yet, in spite of such efforts, the absolute number of illiterates has not decreased. The effects of formal education leave much to be desired as to scope and quality of education itself. For many reasons, among them inefficient educational systems, after achieving certain results, tend to dissipate. Such is the case with functional illiteracy.

The effort to enlighten the mind is often frustrated by conditioning factors which arise from the nature of ignorance itself. The best example are politicians who make promises to the crowd, knowing beforehand that they cannot be kept. It would be far better if the people were able to discern intelligently, the reasons for being thus manipulated. Instead of suspecting - through that inherited intuition known in some countries as "native cunning"- that they are being duped. If this were the case, playing politics would be quite different in Latin America.

But it happens often that politicians also ignore the reasons why they cannot keep their promises to the electorate. In fact, ignorance about fundamental causes is much more widespread and deeper than generally imagined by the average spectator of the Latin American drama. It's really not a problem of good or evil politicians, but of prevailing conditions of ignorance in most social relations in Latin America.

Ignorance, plus the tendency to imitate, has turned Latin America into an experimental area for the dogma of class struggle as the only hope of redeeming the peoples of the continent. This is a half-truth or simplistic solution, not due to the absence of injustice or to lack of motivation for revolt against totally inhuman conditions, but because blame is placed on the wrong place and the real causes of underdevelopment are ignored. These can be summed up as radical ignorance itself aggravated by the population explosion. Thus, from an apparently righteous position the blame is placed on structures and systems, as if these were able to exist and function without the persons who build and run them.

Many preachers have devoted their lives to religious teaching. But most people, due to their mental shortcomings, neither understand or accept these messages. Ignorance in religious matters has led to the distortion of values and fomented misguided faith in the divine providence which limits peoples' participation in planning and determining their future. Religion has turned into a refuge where to hide overall incapacity to solve basic difficulties. A certain conformism attempts to underestimate reality and temporal possessions by the old argument that "you can't take it with you". Misguided faith leads people to expect things just to happen instead of having to work for them or paving the way for change. Such so-called confidence breeds passivity, absence of intelligent analysis, inaction, and hope in miraculous solutions.

While the main function of mass media is to entertain and inform, they can also play a major role in enlightening the minds of the peoples of Latin America and opening new horizons for them. It appears, however, that their action has been rather superficial and, therefore, they have yet to fulfill expectations created by the media themselves as potential instruments against the shadows of ignorance.

To sum up, it is urgent to give a new focus to education: analyze in depth how to reach people and direct masses, design bold new methods of reassessing values, and assign specific tasks and functions to mass media so they may act effectively in reflecting Latin America's new reality. This focus becomes even more challenging in view of the ever-growing differences in growth and development with other peoples and nations now leading the race toward human progress and welfare.

It is imperative to revise educational methodologies, structures and systems in order to achieve greater and more permanent and satisfactory results in the real struggle against ignorance among the mass of the population.

Knowledge is Power

Industrialized countries have achieved economic supremacy, gigantic consumer markets, surplus agriculture, reduction of costs, and mass production of goods and services. They have done it by placing emphasis on the **development of their human potential** through adequate educational processes and support for research to assure progress in science and technology. This in turn becomes a whole system of life, an advanced culture that operates and functions permanently despite passing circumstances.

A typical example showing differences in collective behavior to handle unexpected emergencies on a short and long term basis is the 1988 draught in the United States. Besides measures to alleviate the destruction of crops, a study was done on the "greenhouse effect" and polar gaps in the atmosphere's ozone layer. For, according to recent meteorological observations and statistics, these are responsible for changes taking place in the planet's climate. What a difference with the approach taken in some regions and countries of Latin America with regard the emergencies such as earthquakes, hurricanes and other disasters. There, an endless chain reaction takes place in emergencies, one of dependency and emphasis on immediate relief. Victims directly affected **expect** local governments to solve all their problems. These, in turn, expect the central bureaucracy to resolve a situation which is usually far beyond their meager power and resources. And, finally, central governments expect foreign aid and the solidarity of the international community in order to face the problem even if only partially. With the aggravating circumstance that, if anything goes wrong, the latter are usually blamed for any deficiencies.

In the industrialized world, scientific strategies designed on the basis of concrete elements are applied to all activities. Therefore, in economic and industrial fields it's possible to lower costs and face a competition growing at giant steps through technology, marketing and advertising.

The last century witnessed inventions such as electric power, the steam engines, the first motorized vehicles, the telegraph. Technology was then incipient, but its initial limitations were gradually overcome. In communications, for instance, what then involved laying costly and lengthy cables has been replaced today by microwave channels and optical fibers capable of transmitting simultaneously thousands of messages to many destinations and multiple languages.

Telecommunications satellites can reach any part of the world. Advances greatly admired by former generations, such as the teletype, the telephone and international television signals, have now been replaced by communications between computers, advances in facsimile transmission, and individual television tuning via satellite.

As result of advanced technology and development of human potential, computer science has now been expanded to education, culture, communications, medicine, industry, banking, business, trade, insurance, service industries, ecological control, agriculture, meteorology, aeronautics and many other areas.

New management sciences have increased efficiency in social organizations, enterprises and institutions so as to render better and quicker services to their affiliates. This has meant growth and efficiency at a quicker pace, as well as lower administrative costs.

And how about the conquest of space? This should not be considered only from the military or geopolitical angles. By departing from the earth's atmosphere and vanquishing gravitational forces, thousands of artificial satellites have been placed in orbit in scientifically programmed positions, fueled by solar energy, to perform specific observation, research and communications tasks for many years to come. All this has resulted in great advances in scientific research and medicine plus greater knowledge about earth as seen from high above or from beyond the upper layers of the atmosphere.

These advances have been possible through wise investment policies, and not only in material resources, but also in improving the quality of systems designed to find and transmit knowledge and create awareness about collective and individual responsibilities.

On the opposite side of ignorance are enlightenment, knowledge, learning. This doesn't mean merely managing scientific theory, but rather knowing how to live, to communicate, to participate in the life of the community, to keep the peace with our fellow human beings and with the world and nature. This goes beyond academic learning, as a by-product of life itself, as accumulated experience; in sum, the richest resource of all peoples and nations.

Humankind advances at gigantic strides and each day discovers new horizons for learning and action. Even routine everyday actions are refined such as eating and preserving food, brushing our teeth and sleeping, while at the same time being able to explore to the edges of the universe. The same thirst for knowledge drives us to study the atom in its microscopic grandeur and to explain the vastness of the cosmos through one unitary theory. And while all this is being accomplished, millions of Latin Americans are left behind at a distance which grows at astronomical pace, enshrouded in the shadows of their own ignorance. There are still countries in Latin America where in the penultimate decade of the 20th century it has been impossible to reduce illiteracy rates to under 40% of the population.

There are more than 150 million illiterates in Latin America according to the latest statistics published by UNESCO. This means 17% of the world's 890 million adults are illiterate. Underdeveloped countries account for 98% of the total, or 872 million. Illiteracy is but one symptom of the backward state of these countries.

Nations at the vanguard of progress have reached that position due to investments made through the years to prepare and train their peoples. Latin America's most grievous mistake has been not to consider its **human potential** as the key to development. Too much precious time has been wasted already not instilling development where it should have been from the very beginning: in the minds of men and women.

There are underdeveloped countries because their peoples are underdeveloped.

CHAPTER II

Endless Poverty

The Culture of Poverty

Poverty is a relative concept because it is based on judging which needs are fundamental and what minimum requirements are to be satisfied, thus, determining the degree when privation becomes intolerable. Poverty has much to do with the social habitat; with dignity of the human being within a given society at specific points in time; with freedom, education and integration into a community; with climate, housing, health care and individual self-esteem.

Poverty means having no assets. Poverty ensues when basic needs cannot be met. From one era to another and from place to place, changes develop in the scale of values and needs. For this reason the definition of poverty varies according to circumstances of time and place.

But let's keep in mind that these definitions can be merely academic if poverty is not approached as a culture and a way of life whose immediate goal is seeking **our daily bread.** This day to day status cited by philosophers and poets means that only the present matters; the past is but a memory of rut routine with no meaningful events; and a hopeless, uneventful future because it is but an extension of a permanent present, which hinges on something alien and intangible called destiny.

The absence of hope leads to immutability, to letting things happen without trying to control them. This accounts for the weakness of soul and spirit which results from physical poverty and expresses itself in indolence, indifference and living from hand to mouth, all so common in Latin America. All of this within a fertile environment, rich in resources, yet unable to harmonize people with their own dignity as well as with mother nature.

Poverty invades the mind, impoverishes thought, understanding of the world and self-esteem. Such environmental poverty can only engender more poverty.

The poor are always ready to listen and believe, expecting miracles or miracle workers. Popular imagination creates a magical world in which someone from God knows where, will suddenly appear to redeem and save them just because they happen to be poor.

Studies carried out on poverty as a culture reveal a series of accompanying pathologies. Such phenomena as alcoholism, home desertion, child abuse, prostitution and early sexual relations with attending prejudices and taboos, school drop-outs, high levels of malnutrition, low mental development, theft, usury, mendicity, and child labor are poverty's multiple indicators. This list is not exclusive. While poverty prevails it will be impossible to curb certain types of crime. Yet not all crime is generated by poverty.

The poor also hold to accompanying cultural values which develop their own ties of solidarity, different from those of other social strata: for instance, mistrust of the state and its authorities; skepticism regarding life and disdain for bourgeois values; and a strong tendency to live only in the present without planning and providing for tomorrow.

The poor are not naive. Quite the opposite is true: they are shrewd, and having been duped so frequently, they develop a sixth sense to realize when they are being taken. In turn, they learn how to deceive others if it becomes necessary. This is the so-called "native cunning" perfected by Indians during the Spanish conquest, graphically described by some chroniclers as the capacity to appear to obey without really obeying; in other words, keeping up appearances. Thus they construct their own world, a blend of fiction and reality, so as to defend themselves as best they can. It is their own formula for compliance: I comply, yet I lie.

Expressions of poverty in the countryside are even more poignant. Inhabited by families at the lowest level of subsistence, rural areas are rapidly becoming deserted as more and more peasants succumb to the powerful attraction of moving to the city, lured by the mirage of jobs or anything else to eke out a living.

Such mobility of poverty contributes directly to growing over-population in Latin American cities while rural areas are inhabited mainly by old people and children. Tragic examples are **favellas**, slums, squatters' villages and belts of misery which proliferate both rapidly and chaotically.

Poverty is not only lack of money for food. Such a vision is restricted to a purely material concept. When speaking of the poor, we usually think of misery, of being almost totally deprived of assets, chattels, money, properties. But there are different types and varying degrees of poverty related to spiritual, social and cultural factors.

Indigence and Mental Development

When you lack everything, when you have nothing, you are no longer poor. You are indigent. Indigence, the severest form of poverty, is endured daily by 70 million Latin Americans. This is a tragedy, probably the greatest tragedy on this continent.

The word **indigent** describes those who have no resources to acquire basic nutritional elements with enough calories and protein to survive. According to technical studies, "the level of indigence" relates to minimum income requirements in order to purchase enough low-priced foods in the cheapest marketplaces to replenish energy wasted just to survive.

This is why hunger is the clearest indicator of when poverty becomes indigence. Latin America has yet to witness vast human tragedies such as those of Biafra and Abyssinia or other regions of Asia and Africa, where entire populations have been wiped out by famine. Yet if this has not happened massively, doesn't mean that hunger is absent from the Latin American drama. Its most eloquent expression is malnutrition as seen daily on city streets and trails of towns, villages and hamlets. This has a destructive effect on the minds of new generations of children, stunted in physical growth and hampered in developing their mental faculties.

Neurons which make up the brain do not reproduce. Instead, they die during the process of life. Human beings require protein intake during their entire life, but especially in the embryonic period and immediately after birth. This is why health care must begin even before conception. When supply and balanced assimilation of food are insufficient to adequately nourish the mother during pregnancy, she absorbs reserves from her own body to contribute to the propagation of the species. But when privation is substantial, her reserves are not sufficient and thus tiny and vulnerable creatures are born with scant resources and in inferior conditions. Both mother and child will suffer the consequences.

Mental development is biologically dependent on neurons. A person is born with billions of them. This is why each human being has such fabulous potential. In this context inter-relations between neurons are unfathomable; we still do not know what results could be achieved by tapping all this huge network of connections. While the potential is enormous, its development is contingent upon nutritional levels during embryonic and fetal periods. When malnutrition is present, higher functions of the nervous system are deficient. Hidden hunger, insufficient nutrition and inadequate diet deteriorate humankind by damaging physical consistency and mental capacity in each individual.

The effects of this problem are not limited to the present. The gravest consequences will appear when the undernourished children of today's generations become people who must work, procreate and respond as social beings. Hunger will show its claws then because famished peoples tend to reproduce and perpetuate poverty and indigence, constantly increasing the drama of misery. Not being static, indigence spreads through ever-growing social spheres. If not corrected in time, it will spin out of control.

In sum, vast Latin American masses wallow in the drama of indigence. Their daily input of calories is just enough for survival; they do not live but rather vegetate covered with just enough clothes to hide their nakedness, a condition promoted by harsh tropical climates. They have no homes, but live in hovels with no ventilation or sanitary services, covered by makeshift roofs of tin cans and cardboard, piled one on top of another in squatters' villages and misery belts. Here nutritional levels are low while the incidence of parasites and diseases is extremely high. They are either illiterate or have low-grade formal education. Many are the children of broken homes in which the mother is responsible for their upbringing. They are unable to participate in organized groups or economic activities that might increase their meager earnings, and have limited prospects in communications and mobility. Most are jobless, ignorant of their duties and rights as citizens and members of religious affiliations. They are unable to love and enjoy nature. As we approach the end of the 20th century, such is the drama of large segments of Latin Americans who, besides, continue to multiply themselves at an alarming rate.

Honest Ingenuity

Poverty engenders a peculiar dynamism that can be labelled "the art of making do". This expresses an astounding capacity of Latin American common men and women to find honest and otherwise ways to survive; just enough ingenuity to overcome desperate situations without falling prey to despair; an honest homespun entrepreneurship practiced by thousands of vendors who daily hawk sundry merchandise through city streets. They all have something or other to sell. "The art of making do" is the peoples' answer to the drama of present-day poverty. But clearly this will not get to the root of the problem as a viable solution.

This native ingenuity should be further utilized in order to survive and solve short-term crises. Because peoples with ingenuity and imagination have potential to move forward. Economic conditions permit many to survive from minor commercial transactions and cottage industries producing goods and services generally accepted by society. At the same time, however, other larger and more powerful groups seek profits through means that jeopardize the lives and assets of their fellow beings.

The scenario of poverty is made up of shadows as seen against the light. Needs can be regarded not only as shortages, deficiencies and unsatisfied demands, but also as incentives and catalysts. The poor's sense of hope may also be exploited by those intent on deceiving the masses. Or it may be wasted in paternalistic attitudes that foment passive waiting instead of realistic action in favor of true redemption. Such gregarious instinct, for instance, could be channeled toward solidarity for establishing organizations to improve overall welfare. Yet this option is clouded by lack of basic knowledge and individualism. They possess ingenuity and entrepreneurship (a talent which has saved Latin America from great social cataclysms), but they can be easily wasted on tasks which, in the long run, jeopardize or damage society in general.

The poor are basically intelligent and capable. And here lies the grand hope that they may overcome poverty, and acquire knowledge and training to take advantage of the surrounding world, to conserve natural resources, to live within the social fabric and to build a new life for individuals, their families and their offspring. While poverty on this continent may be radical, this doesn't mean it cannot be eradicated.

Ethics and the Consumer Society

Much emphasis has been placed on cultural facets of poverty in order to concentrate on mental values and structures as a first step toward the solution of this problem. This doesn't mean underplaying requirements of capital investment and purely material needs such as housing, distribution of foodstuffs, school restaurants, small business, community enterprises to create employment, as well as associations, boards, cooperatives and other vehicles of community and social development. Each and every one of these is geared toward overcoming poverty and creating new guidelines of social behavior. While some of these programs are designed to meet emergencies only, others provide action for real improvement.

In Latin America, it should be pointed out, probably due to misguided preaching on spiritual values, everything that relates to humankind's material progress seems to have a sinful or dishonest connotation. This is expressed in the popular belief that affluence can only be the by-product of unlawful actions smacking of exploitation and injustice; that wealth is always illegitimately amassed; that an adequate lifestyle cannot be obtained by honest work; and that the only way to material success is illicit business. Thus a double standard is promoted. While lip service is paid to condemnation and criticism, inner feelings are rampant with envy and a sense of failure.

With such double standard, in itself one of the major effects -- or causes -- of mental poverty and an incapacity to interpret the world it is not unusual for Latin America to have become a sad pawn in the drug traffic now destroying both producing and consuming countries. The proliferation of **mafias** devoted to such traffic foments bribes, fraud and cruel forms of violence and utter disregard for human life.

There is need to carry out in Latin America serious studies and programs to create, promote and defend economic activity which normally contributes to creation of wealth and its use for society's common good without arousing suspicion and envy aimed at those who benefit from legitimate efforts in this direction. It is urgent to redeem for society the values of productive and organized work; in other words, the essence of Christian work ethic.

The so-called consumer society should not be condemned on the flimsy pretext that it damages spiritual values. Quite the contrary is needed: to teach and recognize that human well-being - a clear spiritual expression - could not possibly exist without economic production, and that this output must also generate capacity for use, that is, for consumption.

Charity or Human Development?

Any program against poverty in Latin America must start with education as a first step. But not only academic learning but education for life. Thus the poor can gradually grasp the notion that, notwithstanding their lack of personal means, they are surrounded by resources which they can learn to utilize. That they must also appreciate the value of well-directed solidarity; learn minimum technical requirements for handling available resources, tools and raw materials; and trust in themselves and not on charity or aid. Then and only then will they reap benefits from plans to improve their lot.

In establishing new cultural guidelines and values, the foremost instrument to defeat cultural poverty is not just teaching of academic subjects, but promotion of basic respect for inherent human dignity. It is essential to convey the notion that problems can be solved only through the will of the individual. This is a fresh and different approach to life in facing both the world and society. It means creating hope where there is despair and casting light upon the shadows. It requires life models that can be understood and followed. There are many ways to see the world through the color we choose: black in despair, or clear and bright when there is ambition, pride, self-esteem and will to overcome problems. Without this essential educational perspective, all the rest are doomed to failure because they are founded on simple teaching and not on using, increasing and efficiently tapping available resources.

When there is no action for cultural change, material aid becomes just a subsidy, a charitable donation spent on the spot for daily livelihood of a few, or a way to solve daily needs to prolong survival. The worse thing that can happen to poor people is to learn to live off charity, to depend entirely on alms. The way of wisdom and efficiency is to concentrate on training such peoples. Training aimed at the root of the problem and not to merely alleviate symptoms, designed not to disguise poverty's effects but to enlighten and aggrandize individuals within the framework of culture and society. Thus individuals, families and social groups will all share in benefits. This is how to open new horizons and set promising goals for community members to become architects of a better world.

Essential cogs in new social curricula needed in Latin America are education and training for production and consumption based on clear and concise understanding of and support for values of labor and the economy. In this context, respect must be shown to those who work and produce honestly and, paradoxically, have often been portrayed by demagogues and preachers as social parasites, predators and oligarchs, responsible for violence, injustice and assorted other evils.

Unfortunately, reaction to the establishment of strong and vigorous economic systems requiring discipline, sacrifice, daily devotion to work, as well as personal, family and social responsibility, appeal to apparent spiritual values and misguided apologies which glorify poverty. The result is to rationalize laziness, instability, lack of discipline and provision, contempt for work and a misguided cult for idleness.

These are the risks we run with such tendencies as **commitment to the poor** and **the church of the poor** which have had so much influence in recent years. If we pretend to rationalize the people's poverty as their passport to everlasting glory, we are negating value to human effort and capacity to excel. If we pretend to make the poor affluent by sheer magic and no work, we are denying inherent values of poverty as a virtue and a blessing. And if we merely seek to mobilize the poor against the rich, we are courting hatred, a feeling which is alien to real Christian values.

We must return to essential values and act within reason and understanding, discarding social images and slogans charged with emotion and having little substantive content. In this, as in most other tasks, we must admit that education is not the only solution. Education, however, is at the root of solving all social problems which now burden the Latin American continent.

CHAPTER III

The Devaluation of Development

Entropy of Concepts

There are booms in words and meanings when it is fashionable for everyone to use them, as well as periods of devaluation when they are discarded into oblivion. This has happened with the concept of development. At a recent point in time, somewhere in the 1950's and the 1960's it became a fashionable word. But its importance started to wane when the Rome Club concluded that development had its limitations and that permanent development was just so much wishful thinking.

The same thing happened with regard to the concept of **underdevelopment**. At that time the main concern of the underdeveloped world consisted in solving the problems which contributed to such status. But from that moment on, particularly in the 1980's, a double situation took shape. On the one hand, underdeveloped countries were seeking new objectives and ways to attain them because they had found it impossible to follow the same path as developed nations. On the other hand, affluent and industrialized countries regarded the awakening of the Third World as some kind of threat, based on its enormous population and number of states with voting powers in international organizations, mainly in the United Nations, and on potential competition from its cheap manpower in the marketplaces of the world.

This fear concerning development and underdevelopment created a whole set of complex issues affecting internal imbalances (especially in less industrialized countries), as well as confrontations between nations and groups.

In Latin America this conflict is now growing in certain regions and countries such as Central America, Colombia and Peru. Elsewhere they may be less visible, but this does not mean they are less explosive. As guerrilla activity broadens, more and more terrain is taken by subversive forces to set up "free territories" and "independent republics".

On the other hand, these countries aggressively resent interference by metropolitan powers, especially those labelled "imperialistic". It would seem they base their own hopes of redemption on the misfortunes of affluent nations. As such antagonism increases, it becomes harder and harder to find adequate solutions to hunger, misery, malnutrition and lack of education -the endemic woes of areas geographically called **underdeveloped.**

Some merit is due to the fact that the problem of underdevelopment should have been the object of interest and concern for governments, nations and the world in general. It doesn't really matter if it no longer holds the attraction of former times. What matters is that a goal was defined then and it has not been modified: to mobilize large masses of human beings, including those who have already broken the barrier of indigence, and start them on the way to better standards of living.

Development and Underdevelopment

As an approach to study underdevelopment, it was thought most countries go through the same stages and take the same paths toward the common good and enjoyment of services which make up a better quality of life. With this outlook, underdevelopment was like starting a race from scratch. Thus, when countries were prepared to make a start, they were no longer labelled underdeveloped but called **developing** instead. So if underdevelopment was the starting point and the moment

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when the race began, then development became the main objective, or the finish line, as well as retribution for effort.

Classic texts of that period listed economic development by stages. The final phase came when a large percentage of the population acquired enough consumption power to create large and massive markets to absorb growing production. Such an approach assumed that production meant jobs and that these would generate enough resources to guarantee purchase of services, either directly or through taxation. This was called the **consumer society**.

This school of thought also regarded countries as more or less closed units. It paved the way for each to follow its own path with the least amount of intervention from the rest and to do it at its own pace. That is, with a rhythm compatible with its own population, resources, and technological development, according to its own social and cultural features, because, along with the growth of production and markets, there was to be no "cultural homogenization".

This apparently simplistic vision, a result of historical analysis, had a great influence when it was articulated, mainly because it provided relatively clear and precise steps of operational and political action. But reality soon overshadowed theory and it was said then that external help was required to start the race; in other words, seed moneys: foreign loans and investments. It was also necessary to make savings compulsory by restricting public and private spending, and this frustrated the revolution of rising expectations and exacerbated social conflicts. Since it was admitted that countries were far from being autonomous entities, measures affecting world markets normally produced undesirable results in the evolution of weak economies in underdeveloped nations.

To face these facts, at the time when theories on development were being initially enunciated, a new interpretation was proposed on the basis of a new reading and adaptation of the Marxist theory on capital. According to this approach, further development in affluent nations would increase underdevelopment concomitantly in Third World countries because progress in capitalist metropolis would be achieved at the expense of cheap labor and excess profits in satellite areas. According to this theory, development and underdevelopment were not the start and finish of a process, but two different historical situations opposing each other within the scheme of domination-dependence.

Many factors contributed to wide acceptance of the theory **domination-dependency** as a way to interpret Latin America's blueprint for development. First and foremost, because it upheld the region's cultural unity, or rather its diverse cultural identities, and did not accept as the finish line unconditional imitation of policies and values of the metropolis. Secondly, because people in general did not feel foreign loans and investments would benefit them. Third, because **the revolution of rising expectations** aggravated social conflict, elevated to a greater degree by the population explosion which doubled the number of people in less than a generation or three decades. And in fourth place, - just as in bygone times, difficulties and suffering were the only way to eternal salvation -, new generations in their realm of values did not accept that the fruits of their efforts should only benefit future descendents.

This new approach to development and underdevelopment had such an impact that it actually created new ways to interpret the reality of Latin America among anthropologists, sociologists, economists, politicians and other leaders. Even within the framework of Christianity, it turned into a dialectical interpretation that came to be known as the **theology of liberation.** The religious hierarchy itself supported this movement and in so doing described the situation in Latin America as **institutionalized violence.**

Conceptual devaluation of theories and opinions on development and underdevelopment has been in direct proportion to disenchantment with existing models. Yet such disenchantment has not been channeled toward new positions based on analysis of the circumstances and limitations leading to previous failures. Neither has it motivated real and constructive solutions to help these countries solve their difficulties and emerge from the conditions of backwardness in which their great masses are forced to survive.

Toward a New Position

Hiding our heads in the sand - the ostrich syndrome - is certainly no solution and it leads nowhere. Disenchantment with personal development or disillusion with populist approaches are neither acceptable nor constructive as public attitudes. Rather it would be really useful to find a new escape based on whatever good and positive facets can be extracted from previous theories. Because not all of them failed or had negative results, and there are useful lessons and partial truths to be derived from this to that position. Such soul-searching might well lead us to realistic and viable formulas. Historically speaking, to a leap forward instead of backward.

The truth has been articulated probably many times, but no one wanted to hear or understand it. The problem of underdevelopment cannot be limited to social structures, even if some of these can be justly criticized or if they happen to support unfair concentration and use of wealth. Neither is it ruled by economics, even if we have to admit the only road leading to wealth is production. The heart of the matter is eminently human because only developed persons are able to create development. Unfortunately underdeveloped peoples can engender only underdevelopment.

While this humanistic concept of development may appear simplistic and naive, in the last instance it is the only one that can produce effective and lasting results. The narrow economic position has failed because it places all emphasis on mechanical means, as if economic factors were machines that can be driven, accelerated or stopped. But finances also have a human face, and people possess infinite capacity to mock and uncanny imagination to weaken control measures which they feel are adopted to make their life miserable. In the end they provoke results completely contrary to the original intentions of legislators, governments or international agencies. Even at best, when there is the goodwill to cooperate, such measures fail due to incapacity, inefficiency and uncooperative action of individuals, organizations, institutions or groups responsible for implementation.

When people have to survive daily tortures such as economic devaluation, monetary measures provide only temporary relief. The real value of currency is based on full production and healthy utilization of national resources. If these prerequisites are not met, it can be safely forecast that Latin America will continue being a chronically sick continent, suffering constant relapses, each one worse than the last.

Disenchantment with the devaluation of concepts and ideologies once welcomed and supported comes from forgetting the simple truth that mere structures and programs and good intentions do not produce the desired results. First you must count on the goodwill, determination and training of the individual persons and groups in charge of implementation by carrying out specific tasks for the common benefit.

Human Development: A New Conceptual Value

To face this crisis of concepts and ideologies, let us look objectively at the facts and seek adequate alternatives. If we persist in correcting problems only in their external appearance without fathoming their profound causes, just as it has happened in so many decades of continuous and yet useless efforts, we shall make the same or even worse mistakes.

From humanitarian arguments we have often heard litanies about all the good works that could help the poor deprived of health, education and housing if only a part of what the great powers spend in weapons was earmarked for this purpose. It is highly improbable that such resources could ever be assigned to solution of social problems or to support developing nations. This is especially true at a time when nuclear arsenals are being reduced and in the light of huge public debts and budget deficits prevailing in such powers, where their own peoples are demanding additional investment in domestic social well-being.

Many institutions involved in planning and implementing development are concerned because they clearly see the failure of theories and economic guidelines which were supposed to govern and orient this process. And not due to apparently well-planned machinery but to incapacity on the part of people in charge of implementation and management.

We often forget the lesson of history that advanced peoples produce development and backward peoples produce underdevelopment. Also, that underdeveloped in any given country is entrenched at all levels of the social scale among leaders, politicians, business men, traders, workers, religious leaders, sportsmen, organizations, enterprises and institutions. In sum, underdevelopment is a vicious circle which engenders more underdevelopment.

The greatness of any given nation depends on **fulfillment of its human potential.** It's plain common sense that Europe, the United States or Japan did not reach their levels of development from external aid, but through the efforts, determination, devotion, commitment and training of entire groups and generations. In a continuous process, they implemented cultural and economic programs which in turn broadened their markets and made possible the lifestyle they now enjoy.

Human Dimensions of Economic Development

It must be clarified that reassessment of development within the humanistic concept does not preclude economic development in the sense that progress or improvement of living conditions are not possible without expanding markets and increasing mass consumption.

Sophisticated mass communication media in ever growing number now reach the people of Latin America. Thus they are exposed to advertising about the latest in consumer goods and new lifestyles. Not only are they informed about what goes on in the world, but also impacted by images and messages promoting all sorts of domestic and foreign products. Commercials filled with psychological suggestions, repeated over the radio and in full-color television, reach more and more people regardless of where they live or their social and economic status.

The world of consumption is seen by both illiterates and trained professionals, housewives and children, peasants and workers, civil servants and industrialists. With its suggestive messages it penetrates the mind and the senses to display a whole world of consumer products and creature comforts. In sum, the good life and all it implies in fashion, food, beverages, appliances, recreation, housing. In most cases this only creates unreachable expectations or confused feelings of inadequacy, envy, frustration and disarray in selecting priorities.

Today's advertising techniques are designed to create markets, and motivate consumption, to move individuals, groups and masses. It is the motor that impels behavior and influences economic development to a great extent. It is not for us to judge its intentions, objectives, purposes or content. We should admit, though, that in this context human development has to take place in a world growing each day more complex and where new markets surge constantly. We cannot accept negative attitudes on the part of those who argue against this reality and see nothing but harm in humankind's inclination to acquire new things and accept innovation and change. This attitude creates counterproductive effects in the economical, psychological, sociological and political fields.

To oppose change and growing markets is to stop human progress and cut off a source of income vital to social development. There is no viable economy without markets. Too much emphasis on human development should not lead to presumed reductions in the habits and needs of consumers. Labor generates goods and services which should be placed at everyone's disposal through appropriate marketing systems. Through more labor and production resulting from higher levels of productivity, there will be greater abundance of goods and services at the disposal of the community. General well-being and quality of life will improve accordingly.

It is obvious that these processes do not occur spontaneously. Government action is required to organize and enlarge access to goods and services. Human development does not mean destruction of production or entrepreneurship; rather, it makes greater contributions to the general good, and not only with dedication and ingenuity, but also with direct participation by their resources and wealth. These facts cannot be changed. Those who produce have the capacity to save and invest. The greater their output, the greater their savings and investment capabilities.

Whether they are groups, nations or individuals, those who create wealth and develop science and technology increase economic productivity and generate larger prospects of social and human development. Market-oriented economies, whether large or small, national or multi-national, accelerate development itself and will continue growing at unstoppable rates. Economic, social and human development make up an integral equation of mutual influence and dependence which is the logical and fundamental blueprint for the world of tomorrow. It doesn't matter which world - the first (industrialized nations), the second (the socialist bloc) or the third (underdeveloped countries)-, because the equation made up of **production, consumption and well-being** does work everywhere in its triple dimension.

The world of today and tomorrow is a world of production and consumption, large supply, massive demand, and advertising and marketing to promote and sell goods and services. In its deepest meaning, quality of life is contingent on that very same supply of products. Economic progress results from the capacity to create new markets, to encourage supply and demand, and to establish a society where material development does not prevent spiritual well-being but instead promotes and improves it.

Mankind has traded and bartered goods since the dawn of history. Age-old barter is today's commerce with new measurements and symbols: thousands of currencies and their real or depreciated value. It is banking and international trade. It is the **plastic** currency of credit and charge cards. It is instant monetary transactions. It is supply and demand updated and accelerated by computer science and marketing.

These facts should not be denied. False respect for the poverty and frustration of great masses of population cannot be an excuse for underestimating the dynamic force and large social capacity generated by the so-called **consumer society.**

This doesn't necessarily mean denying that technology and consumption can be put to evil uses. But their virtues and possibilities cannot be ignored in the fields of scientific research, eradication of diseases and epidemics, improvement of life expectancy rates and even in greater productivity and performance by human beings. Parallel to unemployment, we have witnessed more liberal working conditions, increased time for leisure and recreation, and automatization of industry. Regarding this last point it should be emphasized that some of these functions were formerly carried out by workers forced to perform in sub-human conditions.

The challenge of the consuming world is not to simply enlarge markets in terms of supply. The latter grows and will continue growing exponentially. The crux of the problem is to create social and economic conditions that will allow greater numbers of people enjoy the goods and services produced by society. Therefore, it is not a question of opposing economic development against social and human development because they are all factors in one simple and integral equation.

CHAPTER IV

New Meaning of Revolution

Toward Clearer Ideas?

The hope of change is one of the motors that drives social dynamics in Latin America. Problems are so great there, limitations so constraining, needs so urgent, that people live in anxious, almost infantile hope that things will change by themselves or that someone will finally come to improve them. This is the common hope of every man and woman regardless of their social level, group or strata.

It is not clear, however, just what change is required or how is it to take place. For the great majority, common sense tells them the desired change has to do with modifying their immediate living conditions. Priorities are set in order to seek and obtain more income to take better care of personal needs, interests and preferences. Many are able to articulate their aspirations in more precise terms such as better housing, clothing, food,transportation, schooling for themselves and their children, plus recreation, travel, health and purchasing power as consumers. It can be safely stated that for the great majority of the population social change does not go beyond these goals.

There is, however, the prevailing notion that somehow social change is synonymous to political change. It may be sought radically through total overhaul of the political system, or through democratic means by hoping that change of government leaders will bring about better times.

Pre-electoral periods bring about such explosions of hope. It is generally believed that new leaders will be able to change the way the people live. In fact, the politicians themselves think they can do it. But reality is indeed stubborn.Even if every new administration accomplishes some results, these never quite meet the expectations of those who govern and those who are governed.

Very few understand the technical meaning of **changing the system**. Many think this means that if the rich were in power before, now the people will run things. Normally politicians avoid saying the poor will be in charge because the people, in their innate common sense, do not want to be poor or to be labelled as such. Possibly, as in the fable about the lion, the people do not want to be led by those who have less than themselves. Maybe this is just a question of language, but it reflects, nonetheless, a certain degree of popular wisdom.

Only the knowledgeable can express the meaning of changing the system. But even among this elite such meaning is not really at all levels. Some believe, laws must be reformed and action taken to remove obstacles used by the bureaucracy to exert its quota of power and give citizens a hard time. Others, while referring to laws, channel their desire for change toward policies that favor and defend individual or trade interests. At the opposite end of the spectrum, others favor growth of the state and its decisive and permanent intervention in peoples lives, as a mechanism against the abuse of power by the private sector. It is normal for those who spouse change in the system to accept new forms of government, among which the most attractive seem to be the socialist type. So-called **statism** has invaded Latin America in the last 45 years. Prior to that time governments were not so powerful, so interventionist, so bureaucratized. This phenomenon has been increased by disguised unemployment and by what in the Italian Republic of the post-war years was called **clientism,** or patronage by politicians.

Just as there are differing views regarding concepts of social change, with a general consensus about its need, there are also many opinions about how to carry it out and keep it in place. Everyone wants - and there seems to be agreement also on this point - that change must come quickly. For needs cannot wait and they tend to multiply indefinitely.

The great majorities do not quite know how change comes about. They have a vague feeling that something must happen at the highest levels, among those who govern and hold power, for any changes to take hold. Many believe those in power are against change because it goes against their best interests, and therefore conclude that everything would improve by simply replacing those foes of reform. Little thought is given about who are the new holders of power or how they will act, or if by chance these government leaders are liable to repeat what, in the popular mind, their predecessors did wrong. They fail to see that change is not feasible unless the basic obstacle, the people's lack of education, is first removed. This is true even if, hypothetically speaking, they happened to enjoy the best government in the world.

Others who have been ideologically brainwashed feel it's important to replace those in power with persons belonging to groups of popular origin. For only these, they conclude, can take specific action to benefit the people. At least this sector is beginning to spouse the concept of popular leadership. However, they are not clear as to how to guarantee that new government leaders, even if they do represent popular interests, will not betray them and end up acting just like their predecessors.

Very few are lucid enough to explain that this problem does not concern just those in government. It requires substantial readjustment of popular values and attitudes, ideas and perceptions, social conscience and culture, in order to support and consolidate new forms of government and novel legal and political structures which endow change with permanence. The few who do have such lucidity are usually influenced by socialist solutions because these have dealt at depth with the problem. They have also been widely exposed and appear to offer the most immediate and viable alternative in the absence of clear, concise and effective thinking on the part of the democratic sector.

Doubts proliferate. For instance, what notions are held by great masses of people concerning democracy and socialism? How many images are represented in these terms used by so many and understood by so few?

Just as there is vagueness about basic concepts and their meanings, there are also many differences regarding ways and means to accomplish change. Some still feel change will come as a spontaneous historical process. They think progress is inherent to the dynamics of humankind because, according to history, somehow it has always gone forward and improved its standards of living. These small segments have faith that advances of science and technology **per se** will soon spread and generate social well-being for the great masses.

History teaches them that, irrespective of government systems and leaders, societies are destined to move ahead. To them, government changes are historic events worth recording but which, in the long run, have little meaning in fulfilling a people's destiny. Yet if their destiny is not fulfilled, eventually such a people and such a society shall disappear from the face of the earth.

This outlook is neither generalized nor explicit. Yet it underlies the people's inborn common sense and in a certain way it can help them live without despair, a virtue some call resignation and others wisdom.

This sense is less common than it is generally believed and tends to disappear in the face of anxious comparisons between the haves and the have nots and those who can and those who cannot. Anxiety grows due to the dynamics of progress which endow the few with high standards of comfort while the great majority lags far behind and is forced to live in subhuman conditions.

In modern times the trend to induce and speed change within a framework of order and harmony is called economic and social development. It is based first on a series of premises about humankind's and society's capacity to act rationally. Second on the possibilities of society to define and defend the **common interests** of its members. Thirdly, on the definition of goals and ways and means to reach them, which nowadays is called planning. And finally on the potential to join efforts, muster resources, utilize existing wealth, get things done, move groups to resolve conflicts, create new opportunities and viable alternatives.

This way of thinking prevails in the middle class with some degree of education. This is how average men and women think, among them professionals, entrepreneurs, businessmen and industrialists, as well as intellectuals and others who must attend to daily chores of constructing a country. This view is shared even by some technocrats who are supposed to run the country. This school of thought favors maintaining social order and defending institutional forms of government, and upholding the community's social fabric as a by-product of historical background.

Yet, at the popular level, there is the growing feeling that the road of development does not lead quickly or broadly enough to hoped-for goals. It is then that the ideal of revolutionary change takes over. This is supposed to be not only quick, but also violent and its objective is eradication of existing structures. It seeks a so-called egalitarian and sovereign society. In simplistic terms, as paramount conditions, it pretends to destroy the rich and powerful so as to put an end to imperialistic domination. And then to establish new forms of government which, just by being popular and revolutionary, are supposed to be beneficial and exempt from subsequent criticism.

Revolutions also Teach

There is something to be learned from political revolutions that have taken place in recent years in Latin America: through these methods it is impossible to carry out the real and true revolution of improving overall living conditions of the people in any given country. Some nations have witnessed drastic and profound changes in government structures and dictatorships have been toppled through revolts shaking the very foundations of society. People, motivated by the mirage of new hope, first participated with relief and joy in the overthrow of power. But such struggle was followed immediately by a phase of reconstruction which really meant repression and sacrifice of lives and human freedoms. Above all, anything achieved to improve the quality of life, opportunities of progress and human endeavor was minimal. So we must ask ourselves if such revolutions were really justified.

When such political change occur, new government leaders give words magical meanings. The term **revolution** itself has new connotations: **hope, new life, new horizons, abundance, freedom, health**. Soon other terms become household words, such as **alienation, dependency, imperialism**, which clearly and precisely define class struggle as a means to keep in power. These guidelines lead to a **conception of the world** which is easy to learn because it is rooted in ethical behavior; that is, the old division between the good guys and the bad guys. The good guys always seem to end up as victims of suffering and injustice. In this particular scenario the bad guys play the role of **scapegoats** - the rich, the powerful and the imperialistic - while the good guys are the people who must suffer and endure the latter's unending injustices.

Thus a utopian and unattainable image is shaped of the new society born of revolution, conceptually called **true democracy.** A system with neither bosses nor workers and free essential health and education services, where everyone works without remuneration for the common well-being. In sum, a **father state** that will take care of all its children, who in turn are asked only to be good and obedient. In a other words, a paternalistic state where personal effort is minimal and retribution heavily assessed on the basis of total submission to, and uncritical support of, the revolutionary ideal.

The history of revolutions is the same and follows identical sequence. For instance, during their initial phase there is an exodus from countries and nations of so-called social parasites and others believed to have reaped the evil harvest of wealth.

In the second phase, all those able to produce, lead or manage are also forced to emigrate. And usually they take along technology and capital.

But after the rich and the so-called exploiters have departed, life does not improve as if by magic. A tough third phase sets in: the country must be rebuilt. New government leaders must see that hospitals, schools and workshops start running again; that industry and agriculture produce anew; that diminished automotive stock gets rolling as before on streets, roads and expressways; and that, in the worse possible scenario of shortages and difficulties, food production as well as health and education services shall not be wanting. To make things even more painful, for many citizens their homeland turns into a jail where life becomes inhuman and revolutionary effort is lost.

The biggest paradox of these revolutions is that those possessing ability, ingenuity and entrepreneurship to produce (and yet called exploiters of the people) are replaced by a bureaucratic and vertical state which is no better than them just because it is called revolutionary and is by-product of revolution. The new classes exercise absolute and unrestrained power as befits the structure of a totalitarian state. At very high costs in human, material and economic terms, the government resorts to institutionalized repression and accusation through the use of informers in order to keep in power.

This paradox becomes even greater when, at the request of the new revolutionary state, foreign groups arrive as managers and **advisers** to help in running the country. It is of course to the latter's interest to survey what local resources can help their metropolitan powers as raw materials to be processed there and eventually returned to **liberated** countries to be paid for in hard currency. It is also true that international powers which have traditionally sponsored such **revolutions** have been obliged to offer generous subsidies to their client states. Whether in weapons, technology or cash, these subsidies are needed to prop up the new economies plagued by tremendous internal and external difficulties. It is now evident that, in the face of repeated failures and heavy internal pressures, the capacity of said powers to continue subsidizing revolution has diminished greatly.

The image of an utopian society in which, as in a mirage, all wishes come true and all frustrations disappear is like an engine generating enthusiasm for revolution. But it is just that: a mirage. First, because it is unattainable. History proves that all great nations were created through enormous efforts by human groups who worked constantly and permanently toward that aim.

Secondly, once the revolutionary state begins to function after the struggle, when dictators have been overthrown and the old ruling classes disappear, there is only effort and sacrifice, toil without set working hours or benefits. Food is scarce, of poor quality and subject to rationing; production and consumption are restricted. Individual incentives and motivation disappear because everything turns into a collective function. So the state becomes a watchdog mustering all actions and resources to stay in power. Such resources would be better applied to take care of urgent human needs.

There is an even more evident result when individual motivation to work disappears. It is replaced by a growing dependency on the paternalistic state. Citizens become passive beings without initiative and creativity, people who no longer possess the leverage of ambitions and aspirations.

In sum, the lessons of the entire revolutionary effort do not show higher standards of life nor exercise of power by those who can lead the way to improvement. Rather, power has been simply delivered into the hands of new human groups, and the country's international dependency has been changed from one power to another.

What happens then to the countries, to national sovereignty, self-determination, the will of the people to succeed and improve living conditions for the masses? After all, weren't these the only valid reasons for having resorted to a revolution and all its sacrifices?

We have to understand real revolution in other terms: increase of income levels, greater potential for personal achievement, broader respect and enforcement in regard to fundamental freedoms, fuller employment and creation of new jobs. In sum, the priority of taking care of human and social needs. A revolution synonymous with the capacity to participate in the community within freedom and full autonomy, self-determination and independence. If we take an objective look at the results of revolutions of Marxist origin and compare their structural changes with the goals just enunciated especially if the whole truth was known -, we would bury once and for all the false hope of the continent's great masses of population that only this sort of revolt can bring about their redemption.

Hopes and Utopian Dreams

What would happen in Latin America if the hope for meaningful change ceased being an option in the immediate future? This question needs to be considered realistically and objectively. Because the subject of socialist options is not always dealt with seriously, serenely, dispassionately and, above all, without resorting to radical positions.

Socialist solutions based on the Soviet revolution became a possibility for Latin America only three decades ago. Starting with the Cuban revolution, this ideology infiltrated the continent as an ethically feasible alternative.

Marxist Ideology gained a foothold and, whether explicitly or implicitly, it influenced the positioning and inclinations of politicians, writers, academicians, journalists and major sectors of labor, peasant and student leaders. In fact, it became fashionable. And as with all fashions, it lent itself to many hues and variations.

There were some methods of general usage and apparently easy acceptance, such as subversive movements, training of guerrillas, fellowships in socialist countries, indoctrination of labor leaders, infiltration of mass media, political use of teachers, and brainwashing of school children.

The reasons for this alternative are many: growing differences between rich and poor and pauperization of the latter; contradictions between technological advances and declining education; dangerous mistakes by the **establishment** and government bureaucracy; and inability by political parties and leaders in general to present realistic and true solutions to the people.

In the last few decades, with some exceptions, Latin American countries have been governed by so-called democratic sectors. So if social differences persist and conflicts get even worse, how can we exonerate the democratic establishment? Why be surprised when the people's sympathies, commitments and overt or covert actions lean toward non-democratic options?

To deny people the chance of profound change in the social fabric is tantamount to slamming the door on hope. If we did this, it would lead inevitably to anarchy and terrorism as irrational weapons in the arsenal of despair. Yet this is beginning to happen, as we can see in daily news bulletins about events that constantly shake the lives of the citizens of Latin America. It is therefore urgent to find new paths and adopt other guidelines so the great Latin American masses will not be denied a way out.

What can such new strategies be? History, the great teacher of life, can point the way. Much can be learned from the example of other nations that have preceded Latin America in this task. The fact that many countries in the world offer their peoples services and benefits in well-organized societies with high standards of living should certainly be food for thought for Latin Americans.

Conditions leading up to progress in those countries should be researched objectively. Their prerequisites were merely the mentality and attitude of individuals able to build their countries and make them grow through proper use of resources. When we affirm that **development is in the human mind,** that only developed persons can produce development and that underdeveloped people generate underdevelopment, we are passing historic judgement on the differences between nations. But we are also proposing a working formula rationally supported by the facts in the sense that viable creation of a new society is not only a political problem, but relates rather basically to education and training.

Only by changing human mentality, by training the citizens of a country to learn how to live and behave as human beings, by broadening educational and cultural opportunities, by constantly motivating people through mass media, and by generating employment and creating new means of on-the-job training, can the real revolution ever be carried out: **The Revolution of Hope.**

PART TWO

PRESENT-DAY LATIN AMERICA: INDICATORS AND PROFILE

CHAPTER V

The Ruling Classes of Latin America

The Changing Face of a Continent

Latin America as a continent is rich in culture and historical content. It is the world of Columbus and Magellan, who as explorers and discovers, are identified more with America than with their native Europe. It is the realm of Humboldt and Mutis, Caldas, Castorena and Bartolache, Cabello Mesa and Vieytes. All of them made great strides in science as they studied and researched the region's flora and other natural resources. It is the land of Aztecs and Incas with their age-old legacies of cultures. It was also home to the Jesuit missions in Paraguay with their blueprint for an independent and self-sufficient society. It is the region of the "Comuneros", as well as of Hidalgo, Bolivar and San Martin, who endowed it with the spirit of independence and the ideal of one great and united motherland.

This part of the world has spawned many Nobel prize winners, great artists, writers and musicians, internationally acclaimed athletes, jurists, scientists, physicians, politicians and economists. The list is endless. They have conquered high places in the universal sphere of arts, sciences and professions. Thus they have proven the caliber of Latin America's enormous human potential.

This region is also rich in natural resources such as petroleum, coal, copper, tin, silver, zinc, uranium, lead, nickel and bauxite. Countries like Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela head the list of the world's top producers of these commodities. Wealth is equally great in agriculture and cattle breeding with nations like Argentina being major exporters of wheat and beef; while Brazil, Colombia and Central America are leading producers of coffee. Mexico leads in the production of corn, and Ecuador and Costa Rica are major banana producers.

Equally impressive is the region's capacity and unlimited potential. It boasts the world's two largest dams that have been built here: Itaipu in Brazil and Paraguay, and Guri in Venezuela. The Amazon Basin is the globe's most extensive forested area, the habitat of massive birdlife. All this makes Latin America, a continent in action, a place where much is still to be done. If only all of these natural resources were coupled with achieving human potential, the continent could become a true global leader.

The population of Latin America has trebled in the past 40 years. From some 165 million in 1950, it jumped to 450 million at the end of the 80's. For the year 2,000, it is estimated that it will reach 550 million.

Statistics show a curious growth in Latin America's urban population from 68 million in 1950 to 325 million at the beginning of the 90's. Life expectancy rates, which in the middle of the current century only reached an average of 51 years, is now 66. Meaningful advances have been made in public services, new roads, improvement of health standards, construction of schools, with their equipment and, reduction of illiteracy rates.

Until the end of the Second World War, Latin America enjoyed a bucolic existence based on villages and extensive agriculture. People might have lived less years, but they ate well. Each region produced what it needed and bartered only those products that could not be grown locally due to climatic conditions. Central governments had very little power in the backwoods. Each village and each social group had its own clearly defined place in geographic space as well as in self-authority. Community, individual, family and social values were highly esteemed.

After the war, the revolution in communications shortened distances, putting an end to such ancestral isolation. As population grew numerically, original communities lost importance. Central governments expanded their sphere of influence and centralized budgets in order to find common solutions to growing problems. Cities attracted peasants like magnets. Previously secure systems based on family relations disappeared. Expectations rose as new facilities for physical displacement multiplied, for many thought such mobilization also meant climbing up the social ladder.

Latin America was not prepared in fundamental concepts for this new phase of accelerated changes. It lacked basic knowledge about conservation and exploitation of natural resources. No curriculum existed to teach what is required for the individual to control and protect the environment.

At about the same time, governments acquired much more importance because they were forced to buy electoral power through subsidies doled out to the people and their growing needs. Furthermore advanced means of transportation made the exodus from countryside to city even easier. More complex than such geographic mobility, however, was the fact that mass communications media spread new lifestyle models based on the advances of other, more affluent societies. Thus the power of the media and advertising became a major factor in changes that dislodged values and lifestyles.

Change in the structure of production forced these countries to become exporters of raw materials and large importers of capital and capital goods. From traditional agriculture they attempted to convert to industrialized farming in hope of producing for overseas markets to generate enough hard currency to import capital and technology. But agricultural industrialization has faced many problems, among them social pressures for land reform, high levels of ignorance among rural populations, and insecurity and violence in the countryside.

The breakup of the bucolic community of pre-war years deepened social differences between developed countries and those labelled at that time as underdeveloped. Conflict in Latin American societies became more violent after World War II.

They attempted to imitate models of advanced communities without taking into account the intrinsic values that motivated the latter to develop through their own efforts. The social drama continues to grow daily as conflicts become even more formidable.

The drama of Latin America has a number of groups who play leading roles: at the bottom are the so-called **lower classes**, which reproduce out of all proportion and thus increase the social burden, diminishing chances of their finding a way out. There are also the **middle classes,** a churning cauldron of conflict and protest because they suffer directly and consciously from the effects of the revolution of growing expectations against the cruel reality of an inchoate economy. And the **ruling classes** who become desperate in the light of growing problems and their impotency to solve them.

Great masses of Latin Americans wallow in the drama of their own incapacity to produce. They are people who lack everything, from the very essentials for existence such as food, clothes and housing. People who also experience deeper deficiencies such as lack of knowledge and inability to participate in decisions and actions, in favor of improvement and development. These are individuals who cannot play an economic role due to their inadequacy to produce and consume. Politics are closed to them because they lack power of decision. As to religion, they have no mental perception to understand transcendental values. In sum, these are individuals who stray further each day from the road to progress.

Not being able to participate is also a way of life with those who make up the so-called middle classes. This is perhaps their greatest hardship because it is also their greatest awareness. Their meager income allows them a minor edge along with a few benefits. Their daily input of calories is slightly higher; they are able to dress a little better; once in a while they can see a physician or go to a health center, especially if they benefit from public or private social services; they live in better houses which eat up most of their monthly income; some have a personal vehicle; their children attend schools and colleges acquiring a smattering of education; they have access to limited amusements and recreational activities. They belong to the masses who are called to exercise democratic power at the polls. This group includes professionals, professors and others who play an efficient role in solving the continent's social problems.

To know, to Have and to Exercise Power.

The ruling classes are composed of small groups of the population. Their main obligation is to provide solutions. They are government officials and political bosses; leaders in religion, economics, business, industry and labor; mass communicators, journalists, intellectuals; and, of course, those who control capital and resources. Social power and influence have been wielded not by one of these groups, but generally by all of them.

Three factors are required to belong to the ruling classes: these can be summarized as **to know, to have and to exercise power.** To know is an intellectual dimension; to have is expressed in economic potential; and the third speaks for itself in the way of political and government power. Combinations of these three factors determines the composition and responsibilities of groups labelled as ruling classes.

The first group in the role of leaders is undoubtedly that of government officials. Their functions grow daily in number and complexity as they attempt to cope with their task. They have to plan, control, supervise and govern. They should also inspire their peoples and provide them with security and trust in moments of crisis. But since survival is becoming more and more difficult for the masses, leaders must find solutions to emergencies and yield to the temptation of subsidies as a quick fix.

The list of such aid is endless: subsidies for transportation media, food, marketing of commodities, health services, education, imports, raw materials. But in spite of such efforts - many of them aimed at solving emergencies - resources for subsidies are becoming more and more scarce. Furthermore, the taxable income of the great masses decreases as their capacity to produce goes down.

A vicious circle is created because governments and ruling classes are unable to solve both emergencies and other growing pressures. At the same time, with each day that passes leaders and government officials must somehow respond to the peoples' needs in order to stay in power. They react by trying to implement at least a figment of all the promises they make to obtain and maintain the support of their constituents.

To make things worse, government officials and groups of other leaders do not take criticism well. This inhibits their capacity to alter course or make needed changes. The same is true of political parties. Their basic struggle to gain power frequently goes against the common interest.

The second group of leaders, made up by **entrepreneurs,** is responsible for increasing economic output, creating wealth, opening markets, generating jobs. This group frequently acts as mere spectator as it watches over events and lets the government run society; sometimes the entrepreneurial class is even in conflict with government. Along with so-called **imperialism**, this group has let itself be blamed for all evils accruing from social differences, perhaps without realizing that such ideological strategy has been ably used by others to establish class struggle in no uncertain terms. In this interplay of conflicts, well manipulated and orchestrated, so-called leftist groups wash their hands and clear themselves of all blame. According to them, they cannot be responsible for over-population, poverty, ignorance and the overwhelming foreign debt, calamities which are clearly works of free enterprise and capitalism.

The third ruling group, no less important or decisive, is that of **popular leaders.** Their role is to represent grass-roots communities and organizations, and to defend the people's interests. This sector includes union leaders involved in the struggle in favor of the workers, many times with the sole purpose of weakening the very enterprises that employ them. As if more employment, better wages and higher standards of living did not in fact depend on the success of private enterprise. This is clearly an example of "killing the hen that lays the golden eggs". On the other hand, some entrepreneurs are clearly

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mistaken when they reject the fact that better redistribution of wealth through higher wages not only supports social justice, but is also a sure way to enlarge markets and give the economy a boost as the people increases their purchasing power.

Another major group is composed of **religious leaders,** most important because they exert influence on the peoples' values and conscience. They have the power to reach into society's ways of thinking and behaving, as well as to guide it in regard to values to be professed and defended. Frequently too much emphasis is placed on the role of religions to prepare men and women for eternal life, thus neglecting incentives to promote human progress and development needed for temporal life. In many instances such attitude divorces present-day existence from future life, and works against material motivation as a source of human stimulus.

Leaders are also intellectuals, artists, social communicators, men and women of letters and even athletes; in sum, everyone who can influence society in one way or another. The group's definition hinges on its capacity for decision and on the influence their decisions have upon the rest of society.

It is wrong to think that groups of leaders are homogenous. In fact, the three main factors - **to know, to have and to exercise power** - are combined in different ways and therefore subject to all kinds of profiles. These become more and more complex to describe because of their dynamic and changing nature within modern society. A poor person can become rich, and a wealthy one turn into a pauper. A scientist ceases to be a scientist if he doesn't keep up with advances. The ignorant can become intellectual through learning. Those who have reached the summit of political power must step down when their terms of office expire or when they are not re-elected by their constituents.

Furthermore, there are degrees of knowledge, wealth and power. There are those who know, have and exercise power more than others in the same position to do so. Therefore, the terms **groups of leaders** and **ruling classes** are flexible and imprecise. Philosophers call them analogous terms because they may be applied to a greater or less extent to a person or group according to conditions, characteristics and circumstances in each case.

History teaches us that the ruling classes have made the mistake in not defining their objectives and not seeing clearly what are the fundamental causes of their problems. They have proved themselves incapable of working as a team with coordination and solidarity. Nations are unified units and they demand that leaders act in a planned, integrated, consistent and constant manner. Latin America is still awaiting such a political decision.

Unstable Pyramid

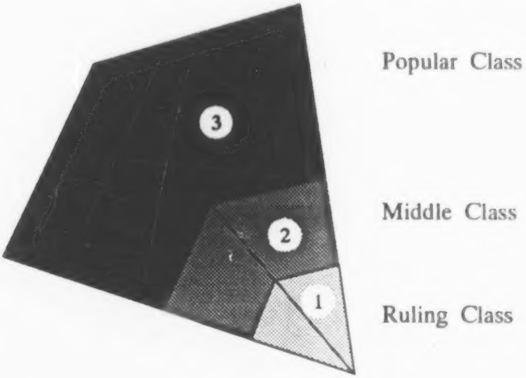
Those who belong to the ruling classes make a big mistake by thinking they are at the top of the social pyramid because they are in power, because their decisions affect the majority or because they can influence popular thinking. In fact, they are at the bottom because in the underdeveloped world this pyramid is inverted. Those who rule are the object of demands, pressures and even violence on the part of the masses. (See Charts 1 and 2).

The force of the masses pressures the class on the apex of the inverted pyramid. The weight of growing problems and discontent, as well as the sheer volume of population, make the social pyramid totter dangerously.

Ruling classes believe only they are called to solve the nation's problems. They have illusions about attempting to solve them and, therefore, as already pointed out, they adopt paternalistic policies based on subsidies. Counterpart to their attitude is the people's Messianism, accustomed as they are to the idea that all their problems will be resolved by the powerful while they wait for manna to fall from heaven. Therefore they exert stifling pressures without realizing that such irrational behavior creates the right conditions for a totalitarian and vertical State. This is the ultimate form of paternalism and also of extreme oppression.

Therefore, between the leaders' benevolent paternalism and the Messianism of the masses, the results are two-fold. First,

Underdeveloped People = Underdeveloped Society

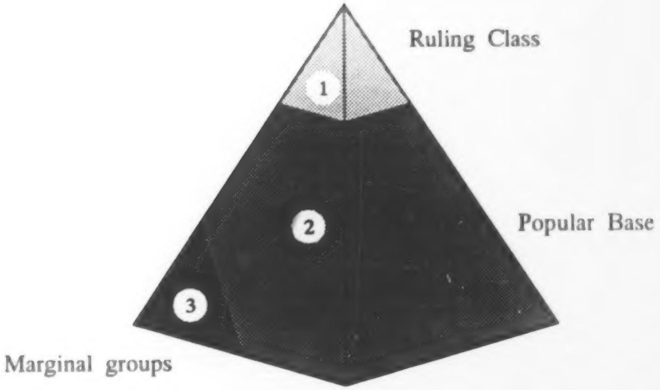

Popular Class
3
Middle Class
2
Ruling Class
1

1. The ruling classes believe they are on top but must bear pressures, respond to emergencies and suffer from the system's instability.
2. The emerging middle class is at the center of the problem.
3. The popular class pressures, receives subsidies and cannot participate productively.

Chart No. 1

\ Unstable Pyramid

Developed People = Developed Society


Ruling Class
1
2
Popular Base
3
Marginal groups

1. The ruling classes invest, develop technology, create jobs and also govern.

2. The popular base produces, consumes, participates, enjoys high standards of living. This is the base of the social pyramid and endows it with stability.

3. Marginal groups; such as the homeless, poor, destitute, handicapped. A minimum percentage.

Chart No. 2

Stable Pyramid

generalized belief that ruling classes are unable to solve problems, thus fomenting discredit for politics and politicians. And secondly, massive frustration and disenchantment which in many cases turns to anger, despair and hate.

The struggle that ensues by countering these two attitudes is aggravated by a third which is deeply imbedded in the popular mind: to find scapegoats on whom to blame all their problems, an attitude which possibly goes way back to ancestral values. Primitive peoples - even the chosen people - felt the need to sacrifice lives to placate the anger of their god or gods. It appears that in today's world popular groups seek to sacrifice society's leaders as atonement for injustice and to redress their deep resentment.

Thus the social pyramid in developing countries is inverted and its stability seriously affected by inner pressures and class struggle. This doesn't mean it loses meaning as synthesis of structure and organization of various social groups. Human society will always have leaders and followers, those who perform management functions and those who contribute with labor toward common targets. We cannot conceive human society without some form of State or government in charge of upholding the common good of its constituents. The idea is not to destroy leaders but to participate in the task of choosing and supporting those who can perform such functions most efficiently.

The basic question here is how to re-arrange the pyramid so as to assure its stability and improved balance. It is logical to start at the base which supports it and endows it with integral form. In other words, we have to begin by including the people through their own education and training as active subjects in the process of improvement.

Latin America is a world undergoing puberty where hope is born anew every day, in spite of so many problems - or maybe because of them. But is also full of opportunities. Finding solutions depends on how lucidly ruling classes approach problems in-depth.

CHAPTER VI

A Debt Worth Billions

I Owe, Therefore I Am

In 1988, thirty-three countries in this continent located south of the United States and Canada owed some 430 billion dollars. From the early 1980's creditor countries and organizations have been growing more and more concerned about the substantial amount of such a debt and the ways and means to collect or re-negotiate it.

There is nothing new or wrong about persons, institutions or countries owing money. From their earliest beginnings, these countries have used credit to spur development and progress. Credit has also been history's greatest leverage. Spanish Emperor Charles V was deeply in debt to the Fuggers, at that time the most prominent bankers in Europe, when he embarked upon the discovery of America and the struggle against German princes who had aligned themselves with the Reformation that Martin Luther sparked. And it was not beneath Luther's dignity to use financial arguments in support of his religious revolt, such as the money troubles facing Peter's See, in order to pay service on the debt it had contracted with those same Fuggers and other, no less important banking houses of Renaissance Europe, to finance the building of St. Peter's Basilica.

From the very dawn of history many formidable feats have been accomplished on credit. Even the discovery of America, whose 500th anniversary we are about to celebrate, was possible thanks to a loan of 2,500 **escudos** (Roughly equivalent to $100,000 today), which according to popular tradition, were supplied by Don Luis de Santangel, a gentleman of the Court of Queen Isabella, so as to save Her Most Catholic Majesty from the embarrassment of having to pawn her jewels.

From Santangel's 2,500 **escudos** in 1492, we are now approaching almost 500 billion dollars which international banks and the Big Seven Champions of Free Market Economy are trying to collect. To reach such an overwhelming figure, Latin America embarked on a frenzied race after the mirage of economic development. This, according to theories in vogue three decades ago, would be achieved through loans made to Third World countries.

Forty years afterward, our countries use whatever operational leverage they have left in the West's lofty financial houses to arrange for new loans to pay interest on the old debts; an interest that mounts up at the giddy rhythm of 86.4 million dollars per day, equivalent to 3.6 millions per hour, 60,000 per minute and 1,000 per second, based on an average interest rate of 7.33% per year.

All of this is now the object of permanent concern for the governments of most Latin American nations. And ever since the deep financial crises faced in the second semester of 1982 by petroleum-producing countries in this region, the subject of their foreign debt has received ever-widening news exposure worldwide. It has also sparked off public demonstrations, riots and disturbances in many cities of our continent.

Within this context, at the end of 1986, eight Latin American countries met in Rio de Janeiro to establish permanent machinery for political consultation and action. This was but one more step in the many taken at different points of time to attempt the always laudable goal of unifying the region. However, this part of the world continues to display today, in dramatic contrast with the 50 "united states" of North America, the spectacle of 33 "disunited states" of South and Central America and the Caribbean. Meaningfully, the first meeting of the eight foreign ministers took place in the Colombian port of Cartagena, where a few months before almost the same debtor nations had assembled to agree on common strategies to face creditor countries and organizations.

Coincidentally, nations of the Contadora Group (Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela) and their Support Group (Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay) are responsible for approximately 80% of Latin America's accumulated debt. By mid-1980's this had become the foremost subject of discussion and unending concern for banks, governments and private, official and semi-official organizations which in the last 20 years channelled to this region a substantial share of their available resources.

The lion's share of the external debt of the Group of Eight in US dollars, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), revolves around the following figures in billions: Brazil $114.6, Mexico $96.7, Argentina $56.8, Venezuela $31.9, Colombia $ 15.9, Peru $ 16.2, Panama $4.1, Uruguay $6.0. A grand total of $342.2 billion.

Furthermore, the debt of Bolivia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Dominican Republic comes to 59.0 billion dollars, which added to that of the Group of Eight, totals 401.2 billion dollars. It should be pointed out that smaller amounts owed by Caribbean islands and the former Guianas increase this sum to the aforementioned 430 billion dollars.

According to ECLA, from 1970 to 1986 the debt **per capita** grew 13 times, from $79 to $1,046 per inhabitant. In regard to foreign trade, service on the debt consumed 15.7% of these countries' exports in 1978 and 35.7% in 1986.

Such is the magnitude of Latin America's debt. This, coupled with the amounts owed by other regions in the Third World, will have profound repercussions on global economy in the 21st century.

Debt and Underdevelopment

As these obligations mount up beyond all proportion, they become a permanent burden for each state. For instance, service on the debt contracted by Colombia in 1822 to finance the new-born republic, as well as the last loans required for the War of Independence against Spain, were included in its national budget until the middle of this century. Amortization of the current debt will have to be paid by future generations during the entire 21st century and even later, unless economic measures are adopted like re-negotiating or writing off the debt.

The subject of the debt has been thus far approached with political criteria. It is only logical that this should be so because most obligations were contracted with electoral purposes in mind. This resulted in grave distortions as to the destination of funds obtained through such credits. It is unfortunate that in the bureaucratic lingo of official documents regarding the debt, as well as its management and re-negotiation, governments themselves are careful not to mention such embarrassing and worrisome subject. Particularly at a time when viable solutions must be found for what is generally known as the "debt problem". For the problem is here and won't go away. This is becoming clearer every day to both creditors and debtors.

It is typical of the Latin American mentality that each time the subject of the debt is broached, it unleashes recriminatory indictments which distort reality, prevent objective approaches and limit the needed perspective to deal with the matter. From this it seems as if creditors are more to blame than debtors. This is almost inevitable due to the political haze in which the problem is enshrouded. Today battles on behalf of payment or other arrangements - as well as ensuing controversies on the terrible impact these may have in each nation - are in themselves political and social powder kegs.

In the face of these threats, politicians and government officials have opted for apparent solutions smacking of government paternalism and populism. However, since such charity is reflected in direct or indirect subsidies, structural motivation for individual irresponsibility grows in geometric proportion. The state attempts to carry a burden that really belongs on the shoulders of the citizens. This leads to the worse possible vicious circle: the problem grows while corrective measures and strategies are being unsuccessfully tried out, thus aggravating the situation even more.

In the controversy about use and destination of loans, politicians, parties and governments lose reputations. What is needed is to analyze the effects on Latin America of expanding financial strategies which equate progress with indebtedness.

The goal of development is no closer today than it was 40 years ago, when the entire region did not owe as much as one single country today, for instance Brazil or Mexico. Such a goal is more distant than ever. In spite of countless investments, public works, 5-year plans, financial projects for industrial take-off and other loan destinations, Latin America's social and economic reality looms like a gigantic wall that neutralizes and minimizes all kinds of social projects and well-meaning intentions.

Savings and Participation

Another facet of the debt problem is to learn if the Latin American individual is capable of participation in fomenting progress on national and continental levels, and to what extent. The experience of other countries shows that a whole chain of circumstances are needed to reach development, starting with the proper frame of mind and readiness to work and sacrifice toward such a goal, naturally coupled with sound intellectual and physical conditions.

For instance, once a person joins the work force, he or she should be able to cover basic needs like food and housing. Social services should take care of basic health and education for the breadwinner and the immediate family. The individual's horizons for progress will hinge on how much he or she can save. To do this, besides earning a salary, means budgeting expenses in a way not to live from one day to the next, but to build up reserves for the future.

Industrialized nations register high indexes of individual savings, and these are an essential cog in national economic strategies. On the other hand, in underdeveloped countries only very limited sectors of the population can afford the luxury of saving.

Following the debt crisis, major international financial organizations advised debtor countries to adopt strict provisions regarding savings and economic austerity, and some governments were forced to do so. However, these measures have proven ineffectual. Every time structural adjustments jeopardize less affluent sectors of the population, agitators drive the masses into the streets to demonstrate and protest with a tragic balance of dead and injured victims. This, in turn, fans hate and makes dialogue difficult in the search for real understanding.

For the vast masses of deprived people, those who have no capacity to save and therefore cannot contribute to paying the debt contracted by their governments, such an overwhelming collection of calamities can lead to desperate solutions.

This scenario clearly indicates expansion and aggravation of conflicts with no progress toward in-depth solutions. While the masses are incapable of producing and saving, the debt will grow improductively until it becomes unpayable. But if efforts are made for the people to improve their capacity to produce, consume and generate excess income for savings, the amount of the debt will not matter because it could be paid. It's even possible that need for fresh loans might disappear altogether.

Who is Responsible for the Debt?

The almost apocalyptical manner in which Latin Americans have seen the debt problem presented by the media, as well as in statements of Ministers of Economy and Finance, has certain facets touching upon responsibility which cannot be dismissed. Solicitation and approval of loans in themselves are sound economic processes. It is true that Latin America might have squandered away some of these credits. Yet an entire infrastructure built up in the last decades would not have been possible without support from development banks and financial institutions of developed nations. We refer, of course, to ports and airports, industrial and automotive plants, dams and other sources of energy, land reclamation, urban development, electrical and water works, establishment of universities and other institutions of learning and so on.

These advances have been most important for the continent. Although they have failed to meaningfully satisfy the peoples' needs, they do contribute to conditions favorable to progress and work against great opposing forces, for example, the tremendous population explosion of the 1960's, whose dire consequences we are just seeing today. The danger with indebtedness, besides the burden of paying principal and interest in conditions of growing economic deterioration, is that development achieved through such works and enterprises has actually revealed and worsened in many cases the ever-widening differences between rich and poor. In other words, between those favored by such progress and those who have not benefitted.

If debtor countries cannot be exempted from their obligation to pay, it is also true that affluent nations cannot escape their historic commitment to avoid a social catastrophe. And this will surely occur unless economic agreements are reached to permit amortization of the debt in terms suitable to conditions in debtor countries. In Latin America's current situation, this demand cannot be addressed solely to their own governments and leaders. The peoples of affluent countries are also responsible for the economic and social well-being of the rest of humanity and cannot be exempted from the obligations this implies. It is equally important for debtors to pay as it is for creditors to devise machinery for payment adjusted to the former's conditions. To choke debtors means being unable to collect capital and interest. Creditors should have enough wisdom to accept reality. In sum, indebtedness affects both parties, and both may end up winning or losing.

It is dangerous for Latin America to continue indebtedness applied to infrastructure without at the same time making sound and meaningful investments in "the development of human potential", even if results can not be measured in days or months, but rather in years. Human resources are the only force that can accomplish in-depth solutions and create wealth. The present is filled with anxiety, and this anxiety will grow if we fail to think in terms of the future.

CHAPTER VII

Latin America's Ideological Struggle

Phases of Confrontation

Latin America's recent history is part of the framework of the struggle among the Great Powers to achieve world dominance, a struggle waged in two closely inter-related tiers. The first deals with ideas and what the future holds for Latin America in the way of political development: to adopt models of representative and free democracies or totalitarian socialist states. The second tier has to do with everyday historical events, and this is deeply influenced by mushrooming guerrilla movements which combine ideological and social targets with armed conflict and its methods. These include assaults, ambushes, kidnappings, and more recently, wanton destruction and terrorism.

This scenery of ideological confrontation can be broken down into four well-defined stages. The **first**, which could be called **groundwork,** begins in 1945 and ends on 1 January 1959 when Fidel Castro is hailed victorious in Havana, Cuba. This stage is rampant with elation and idealism produced by the victory of the Allies in World War II and extended to Latin America, even if this region did not participate meaningfully in the war.

This great armed conflict, which darkened with death and destruction the history of humanity in the 20th century, affected Latin America only indirectly. These nations did not participate in armed operations with the loss of human lives and physical and material destruction to the great extent experienced by European communities, whose economic systems were wiped out. Indeed, some Latin American countries played the role of larders to the world and profited from selling agricultural commodities and food supplies to the belligerent.

Nonetheless, right after the war Latin America became one of the most important sceneries in the ideological conflict which ensued among the Big Powers once they had agreed on their responsibilities concerning the defeated nations. The Berlin Wall was the most telling symbol of how the world was divided into democratic and socialist powers.

The Allies had not suspected that the end of one war would mark the beginning of another much subtler and lasting struggle. Victory celebrations were hardly over when the two super-powers engaged in a conflict to enlarge their respective areas of ideological influence and take control of the world's economic regions.

The Soviet Union lost no time in defining and implementing its grand strategy to impose the Communist blueprint on the rest of the world. This was done in Eastern Europe and Asia by assuming political power and launching military operations in neighboring countries, as in the bloody Korean War (1950-1953). In other continents this attempt was veiled in ideological infiltration and indoctrination based on the socialist creed.

Just as important - and part of this same strategy - was Mao Tse-Tung's victory in 1949, which paved the way for a Communist government in China, and made him this century's foremost guerrilla leader.

With the advance of communications in post-war years, these events were instantly known everywhere. Latin Americans learned about experiences of other peoples who before they had all but ignored. Knowledge of distant events invited comparisons with immediate realities. And the new strategy was disseminated subtly disguised in sophisticated propaganda.

The **second phase**, known as the **Decade of Development,** between 1960 and 1969, was marked by a series of significant events. Future historians will no doubt emphasize it as one of the most interesting in the second half of the 20th century. This was also the period of the **race for space** in which the Great Powers accomplished the first manned space flight by Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin on April 12, 1961 and the conquest of the moon led by Neil Armstrong of the United States on July 20, 1969.

For Latin America this decade began in 1961 with the Charter of Punta del Este and the Alliance for Progress. A united America (north and south) made a commitment to overcome the region's conditions of poverty. This was indeed a decade of purpose, experiments in administrative policy and land reform, investment plans, and action by development banks, such as the Inter-American Bank and the World Bank, which started to spread credit widely on long-term social projects. In the economic field, following the model of the European Common Market established after the last world war, there were efforts to set up a regional economic market through the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA). But due to difficulties in implementing this initiative, in 1968 the Andean Pact was signed initially by Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. Chile withdrew shortly thereafter.

This was the period when everything **social** became of age. The Catholic Church attempted to extend its leadership to this field. Its enormous influence, especially in densely populated rural areas, committed the Church to propose measures of social action. Many institutions were born in the fields of popular teaching, rural development, community organization. Some of them were small and extremely local and their interests clashed. Seventy years after the first papal encyclical on the subject, social justice was considered from a different angle in Church studies, texts and other documents. Subsequently, as the teachings of many thinkers and theologians were strengthened, the so-called **theology of liberation** evolved.

Pope Paul VI made his presence felt in Latin America at Bogota in 1968, the first time a pontiff visited this part of the continent. After declaring that "development is the new name of peace", he proposed "bold" reforms to solve urgent problems caused by the so many millions of souls living in dismal poverty.

The transition years between the '60's and the '70's, which preceded the third phase, started with a harbinger of what was to come. The May Revolution took place in Paris in May 1968 led by student "Danny the Red" and thinker-prophet Marcuse. A new reading of Marxism in its application to Latin America became fashionable thought. This inspired the region's new revolutionary praxis, and the hard ideology of guerrillas modelled after the Tupamaros movement invaded university campuses and other student circles.

With the rise and fall of Salvador Allende in Chile (1970-1973), the '70's marked the beginning of the **third phase** of ideological struggle in the region. This was characterized by **consolidation of different guerrilla groups** which cropped up in various countries in successive and clearly orchestrated order: Tupamaros in Uruguay, Montoneros in Argentina, M-19 in Colombia, Sandinistas in Nicaragua, Frente Farabundo Mart1 in El Salvador and Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Peru.

At the same time, this phase also posed the first doubts concerning the feasibility of development. These resulted from a study by the Rome Club entitled "Limits to Economic Growth" which showed natural resources were neither infinite nor unlimited and acknowledged growing awareness about Latin America's dependent economies. Such doubts grew toward the middle of the decade when the oil crisis with its resulting high prices shook world economy, accelerated monetary devaluation and instigated inflation everywhere. This was also the time when poignant dramas in Biafra and Ethiopia darkened the world with famine and death for millions of human beings.

Perhaps the most meaningful factor in this phase, haunted by the failure of development in the previous stage, was mutual mistrust felt and fanned by both Americas, north and south, rich and poor. This was aggravated through the powerful influence on teaching of **action for awareness** concepts and methods so warmly embraced by so-called progressive theologians. They went as far as to declare that even if ideological Marxism continued to be contrary to Christian thought still prevailing in Latin America, on the other hand its historical diagnosis and methodology were ethically acceptable as social guidelines to find viable solutions in the region.

The treaty on the return of the Panama Canal signed in 1977 by the United States and Panama was an expression of Latin America's commitment to independence. This philosophy was further supported in 1983 by the establishment of the Contadora Group. At that point in time attention in Central America revolved around Nicaragua, where the **fourth phase** in the ideological war began to unfold on June 19, 1979. In this case, an attempt was made to establish a Marxist state without destroying the values of Hispanic culture.

In this last phase Latin America was dealt a new economic and psychological impact: financial crisis caused by monetary devaluation and economic chaos. This time countries most affected were Mexico and Venezuela, formerly respected for their solid economies based on hard currency earnings from an apparently endless source of petroleum, the most wanted commodity in postwar years.

Through devaluation and structural adjustments, the crisis affected those countries' economies, though they had been able to maintain a stable currency position through 1982 with regard to the U.S. dollar. It also revealed new dimensions in the region's immense poverty: a foreign debt grown so large that it loomed unpayable. Thus the rhythm of economic development was fatally committed; prices of consumer goods shot up uncontrollably; and entire populations became further pauperized as the real purchasing power of wages and salaries declined.

This last phase also witnessed the deterioration of relations between the United States and certain other nations as a result of drug traffic. This problem continues to grow and threatens to reach catastrophic proportions due to philosophical confrontation as to the way to solve it. On the one hand, there are those who argue this is essentially a problem of supply and can be solved by prosecuting suppliers, most of whom are from poor Third World countries. The other approach, more objective and integral, contemplates punitive action against supply coupled with measures to curtail demand through education, treatment of addiction and even legalization.

But while this issue continues to be debated through dialogue and reasoning, drug traffickers ally themselves with guerrilla movements on unstable and unequal terms, making the situation even more complex. To the continent's mounting social problems, drug traffic and drug-related terrorism add heavy daily cost in human lives and vicious effects upon individuals, families, institutions, the State and its various agencies, as well as on social and human values. Thus drug traffic now represents a new scene in the drama of ideological warfare being waged in the continent, even if some countries have been affected more than others by this scourge.

Simultaneously, Latin America suffers from contradiction between the monstrous growth of government bureaucracies and the spread of so-called "informal economies". They both are rooted in the same evil: unemployment and underemployment.

The proliferation of informal economies represents an alternative for survival. In the pragmatic terms of this new economic theory, aptly described as "barefoot economy", emphasis is placed on **self-dependency** to prove that both nations and individuals must look within and learn to live with whatever resources and possibilities are within their reach, instead of basing progress on loans, aid, influence, transfer of technology and even ideological theories from other parts of the world.

As a positive sign within the overall Latin American picture, we must point out that in the last few years several countries have returned to formal representative democracy. New presidential leaders have been elected by popular vote in Argentina (1983), Guatemala (1983), Uruguay (1984), Brazil (1985) and even Haiti for a brief period in 1986.

Role of the Guerrillas

Guerrilla movements with the open objective of taking and changing government power by radical means make up the bloody phase of continental ideological struggle. Their action has progressively intensified and merit consideration due to their historic and political meaning.

Nurtured historically by groups with a belligerent legacy stemming from the 19th century civil war scenarios, they bred on idealistic struggles seeking political autonomy.

The guerrillas in their violent existence became a solution to problems that could not otherwise be resolved democratically. The last four decades witnessed their intensified actions. Writers, artists, journalists, professors, teachers and politicians seeking popularity lend lip service to this particular facet of the war of ideology. Some believe they will enjoy prestige and improve status by belonging to the so-called Left and being on the side of the poor.

The first guerrilla action in Latin America was a resounding success. Coming down from the Sierra Maestra in Eastern Cuba, the guerrillas marched unopposed under a black and red banner. They were fighting against a dictator who had dominated the island's politics for 30 years. They received help both domestically and from abroad. At the beginning of 1959 they threw the dictator out, and for the first time in many years, a victorious revolution took power by armed force.

It was thought then that Mao's theory could be applied in the whole of Latin America. Ernesto "Che" Guevara, an Argentine physician who was with the forces that came down from Turquino Peak to take over Cuba, had previously visited the entire continent on foot. He wrote a Latin American version of the Chinese red bible titled "Guerrilla Warfare". Youth everywhere read it avidly and were hypnotized by the mirage of revolutionary paradise as sure consequence of guerrilla action.

The Cuban Revolution shook the whole of Latin America, and to this day it has continually stirred new concerns at different levels. Leaders everywhere were soon studying the social and political facets of the Cuban case and in each country these were subject of public debate and agitation.

The United States conceived strategies of economic support, and thirty years after the **Good Neighbor Policy**, they revamped it as the **Alliance for Progress**. This was done after Ché Guevara, at a meeting of the Organization of American States (O.A.S.) in Punta del Este, asked for aid totalling 300 million dollars, which at that time seemed an extravagant figure, to solve the problems of development in Latin America.

Almost everywhere, attempts at launching development have produced concentration of wealth and increased imbalances: the capable get richer, the incapable cannot assimilate new responsibilities and the dishonest try to steal. So unemployed, frustrated and impoverished masses were attracted and bewitched by the teachings of Mao and Che as a way out with the apparent hope of immediate success, instead of the slow and gradual stages of evolutive development.

But the guerrilla movement not always took root. In 1959 in Panama, for instance, guerrilla fighters imported from Cuba landed on a Caribbean beach not unlike those that have been the scene of many similar actions in this region. Yet, they were soon isolated and, within 72 hours, surrendered to regular troops.

Che Guevera himself was killed in 1967 while attempting to carry out guerrilla operations on Bolivian territory. His failure in those deep jungle gorges, which immortalized him in revolutionary lore, was subsequently studied and conclusions were reached about his last campaign. Everyone has sought an explanation for such sad ending. One theory revolves around the biological fact that it is not the same to be a 28-year old **guerrillero** in the Sierra Maestra and a fortyish commander in the Bolivian backwoods, while others refer to sociological differences between guerrilla habitats in the Caribbean and among the peasantry of the Andean highland.

It should be emphasized that victories by guerrillas from Sierra Maestra and Sandinistas in Nicaragua were both strongly helped by the United States. The taking of power in Cuba and Nicaragua came about as result of well-orchestrated international efforts to topple unpopular dictators. Only after solemn commitments were made to democracy and freedom did intentions urged to establish totalitarian systems of government.

A continent-wide spectrum offers different interpretations and adaptations of theory to national realities. At their onset, guerrilla movements in Uruguay and Argentina - where they became urban in character - went immediately from groundwork and organization to spectacular action, only to be infiltrated in a third stage by the state's security forces and then almost literally obliterated. Therefore, in the span of only a decade, their members ran the complete parabola from secrecy to prison, a process during which many lives were lost. New political conditions allowed survivors to return to civilian and political life, giving up armed struggle to assess the consequences of their former activities. With much candor, many recognized their folly in trying to solve all the problems that burden the population of the region through armed guerrilla action.

In other countries like Venezuela where guerrillas were once active, transit **from the backwoods to parliament** was not as traumatic, and its cost in human and social terms was much lower. But in Colombia, El Salvador and Peru guerrillas turned endemic and guerrilleros have assumed almost professional status.

Besides considering the guerrilla phenomenon from the point of view of foreign logistical support - something that has been alleged on more than one occasion -, its most virulent forms have taken place in countries where so-called **objective conditions** pave the way for violence.

In the period of four decades since the end of the Second World War, we have witnessed frustration and even failure in getting Latin America's economy off the ground. The reason is obvious: inability to participate by the great majority of the population has concentrated wealth in the hands of a few. In this context the overall balance shows growing inequalities operating as **objective conditions** that foment guerrilla activity. Thus, as success and well-being increase for groups able to participate in development, levels of misery and despair among the great majority who are unable to do so are reaching a critical stage. The latter are easy prey to violence with its tragic toll of blood, death and destruction of roads, oil pipelines, buildings and other public infrastructure which the people could use to improve their economic lot.

Participation and Dialogue: an Alternative

Objective conditions supporting guerrilla action are so clear, and so evident is their historical message, that their causes must be examined urgently and in depth. Repression tends to curb only effects and can become an exploding volcano. Social strategy to find a way out of this historic problem must involve the creation of channels of participation and dialogue. By participation we mean opportunities to partake of society's services and benefits. But it should also involve **training for participation**; in other words, to be sufficiently qualified to help in creating and constructing and in solving problems by **being more** in human terms. As to dialogue, it should be based on **fair intentions** and the search for noble and common purposes of progress. If these measures are not taken, radicalization will ensue with unpredictable consequences.

It seems that Latin America, as one of the battlefields of the two Great Powers in their ideological struggle, has devoted untold effort to wage an alien war and to win equally alien battles. How to justify what these fratricidal frays have meant in blood, death, orphaned children, loneliness and squandered resources? The struggle for economic development as imitation of the economies of great industrialized powers has produced disenchantment and growing sensation of helplessness. Guerrilla movements have also been corrupted by easy money, and have seen their own ideals destroyed.

The winds of change are blowing strongly both in industrialized countries and in those that traditionally were part of the socialist bloc. In the former, relations with the countries of the so-called Third World have hardened through import tariffs which are clearly protectionist.

In socialist nations, as result of Gorbachev's Perestroika and other policies, peoples are now freeing themselves of repression and other typically totalitarian yokes. Poland and Hungary are leaders in making these changes and they are quickly spreading to other socialist countries.

This opening to greater democratic freedoms and adoption of production methods better suited to individual motivation and private property involves in-depth revision of philosophy and ideology.

In Latin America these new trends are apt to have consequences which cannot be predicted at this time. However, doubts are already being expressed about how **classic** and **closed** models of socialism can be adapted to the continent's specific conditions. Some have even asked if the struggle should still be pursued by those who continue to adhere to **orthodox** militancy both in political and military terms. It is quite clear, therefore, that the time is coming for ideological struggle in Latin America to be waged within different parameters.

In the context of changing historical circumstances, it is imperative to re-think Latin America's economic and social future. The pattern of society has to be reconsidered and prevailing examples must be criticized with courage. There is much current introspection about the continent's own values and cultural base, and this makes it easier to separate the positive from the negative. This is, however, a colossal task, in itself a profound revolution and a radical break with those tendencies that possibly have made Latin America stray from its real path.

CHAPTER VIII

The Population Explosion

A Factor that Multiplies Problems

The accelerated growth of population in Latin America has become one of the major problems facing the region, because it is taking place precisely among those people who can do very little to improve the quality of life due to ignorance and extreme need.

This process involves children who are born without support of strong and consistent family structures to assure them basic standards inherent to their human condition. Children of unknown fathers who, as persons, have the right to live with dignity, develop their intelligence and perform like responsible and free citizens. To be able to do this, they require adequate education to teach them how to work and produce and apply these lessons to improve their own lot and that of their fellow beings. They must be active economically as agents of production and development, instead of a burden for the community, as they strive for social well-being and conservation of those natural resources so bountifully bestowed by nature upon Latin America.

Irresponsible procreation in which instinct prevails over reason, disguised by the mask of misguided religious values and beliefs, has become an obstacle to the creation of a more just and human society.

Statistics show how, as standards of education and quality of life decline, thus aggravating the overall climate of neglect, the number of children engendered outside well-constituted homes increases.

If the great majority of citizens merely survive, vegetate and multiply out of all proportion, how can a nation possibly save, invest, adopt new technology, defend its natural resources and participate and compete in world markets?

This is not only a question of numbers. It also touches upon quality and opportunity. As the number increases of beings born under conditions that doom them to join and enlarge the vast masses of the deprived and incapable, social problems overflow. For society is unable to develop other options to the deficient family structure, such as strengthening it or resorting to foster homes. The former would require colossal groundwork in education because the problem is deeply rooted in ignorance. The latter is impossible due to the vast numbers of foster homes required to provide a significant solution.

Desertion engenders more desertion. A homeless child will tend to engage later as an adult, in relationships which produce more homeless children. An individual problem becomes collective and therefore the responsibility falls on society. This must strive for solutions and invest meager resources to alleviate procreative irresponsibility. Thus begins the vicious circle of needs and subsidies.

This is not only an economic issue; it relates to the integral life of the individual and to society as well. Among its many factors, economic consequences are of course included.

The growth of population which affects Latin America in such explosive fashion means that immediate and growing needs cannot be met in housing, health and various public services, highways and other infrastructure, adequate and non-discriminatory educational opportunities, jobs and labor stability, recreational facilities and so on. In other words, the minimum to sustain present standards of living without attempting to improve them. Right now the region is trying to solve problems created 20 or 30 years ago when demographic growth exceeded 3%. The generation born at that time will not wait. They demand results and cannot find them. Social unrest in all its forms - from guerrillas to crime in the streets and drug addition - proliferates hand in hand with over-population. While in the last ten years most countries have been able to lower rates of population growth, these measures are more germane to the future than the present.

Lucidity, Courage and Responsibility

This subject must be broached with a great deal of lucidity; courage is also required to discuss it and to define policies and solutions to be adopted because many factors are at play. Foremost is the **religious** factor, which touches directly upon Latin America's axiological foundations. Secondly, there is the **political** factor. Unfortunately political tendencies prevailing in certain countries use population growth as leverage to reach subversive goals: **more progeny means more proletariat**, and therefore more revolutionary agents. There is a third, **psychological** factor which deals with instinct, individual development and attitude in regard to sexual relations, and has also religious and moral connotations. The fourth factor is **economic** and covers all material questions dealing with lifestyle, resources and possibilities, as well as with complex problems of labor and employment.

All these factors are linked by one major common denominator: **irresponsibility in procreating.**

Irresponsible **parents** who bring children into the world without having objective conditions to assure a dignified process of human development.

Irresponsible **educators** whose own lives are negative examples and who lack conceptual knowledge to enlighten the conscience and mould the will of their charges.

Irresponsible **religious leaders** who in many cases lack integrated and complete vision of human nature and simply reduce the problem of procreation to individual sexual morality.

Irresponsible **scientists and professionals** who should study this issue in all its facets and propose options contingent upon individual dignity.

Irresponsible **state authorities** who, in the last instance, are called to make amends for irresponsible behavior on the part of their constituents and find solutions to this growingly complex problem.

Responsible management of demographic growth behooves **society** as a whole. This cannot allow the human race to be forced into solutions of holocaust and hecatomb as it happens with some inferior species.

The state as leader of society and agent of common good is irreplaceable. This does not mean the state should replace the family because the latter is endowed with its own non-transferable rights regarding the education of their children. Yet the state, which is responsible for the general welfare, must deal with social problems and develop machinery to solve them when the family is unable to do so. Therefore, the state has to further policies of population growth which, while respecting free decision by each family and each couple, should set desired parameters of human and social development.

One of the state's basic obligations consists of improving laws and regulations on civil marriage for all citizens. In the face of today's pluralistic societies, the modern state cannot intervene in favor or against certain creeds, religions or political affiliations.

Each individual has the right for respect to his inner feelings, and therefore is free to profess any religious or political creed, as well as to exercise its principles, rules and practices. Religious marriage is part of this freedom.

The state is expected to support new marital associations with law and justice and thus endow them with order and responsibility. This will assure everyone will do their duty as citizens and family members. Clear, precise and enforceable laws are needed to protect the family, as well as a comprehensive educational program in favor of responsible procreation.

Also required are institutions - like many that have operated successfully in recent years - to furnish educational services and aid on ethical and moral standards of citizenship to individuals and families under their care. Among the former are teachers and religious groups that advocate values of overall responsibility.

Education for Responsible Procreation

One of the most complex aspects of dealing with this subject is the fact that birth control **methods** are given more importance than the substantive problem of sex education as a means to encourage responsibility. The discussion on methods is bitterly controversial but does not help in finding real solutions for immediate results.

By its very nature, sex education has been curtailed due to all kinds of taboos and restrictions. The notion grows that this is a somewhat sinful and forbidden subject. Reference to original sin contained in the Bible's book of Genesis is still interpreted solely as sexual sin, and thus fallen men and women are only those who yield to carnal and lustful appetites. For some moralists sexual intercourse seems more important than its consequences as reflected in the human, social and ethical drama of fatherless children.

In the absence of true understanding of the human, biological and spiritual factors involved in procreation, there is widespread ignorance, fear and false values, and this in turn has distorted conceptual clarity and maturity on the part of society and each of its members. Through the use and abuse of mass media, nowadays we can see both sides of the coin much quicker, as well as the extreme positions, generally the most vicious. It is now fashionable to accept licentiousness disguised as liberty, while "doing your own thing" is called maturity.

The solution is **education for responsibility.** This should not only cover sex information, but overall family and social guidance so men and women may learn to live within the family unit - and to defend and develop it - as the basic central nucleus of society and a real cradle of democracy. For well-constituted homes could become acting communities, and this in turn would strengthen the popular political framework. The greatness of a nation begins in the cradle where newborn citizens are nurtured. Spiritual values are expressed in manifest and operative love by husband and wife as epitome of the spiritual side of every human being.

To teach people to be responsible is to favor - and not to hinder - the fulfillment of human beings and society; it is to support dignity in each person through free and conscious decisions; it is to place reason above instinct; it is to seek truth and not error.

In a Christian sense, training for responsibility begins with the premise that procreative action is what most closely resembles the Creator and his creatures, providing it is performed freely and consciously. Spouses must have full knowledge that by their procreative act, they are somehow pressuring God to exercise his powers to create immortal beings. For it is unthinkable that the children of God, who are also the children of human beings, should be engendered by sheer luck, which in some instances is fortunate while in others spells misery.

To ignore the serious dimensions of this problem is a crime of omission. We must be aware of the situation and adopt education for responsibility so as to build a more just and human society. Incapacity to deal objectively with the issue of population growth has turned it into a virtual time bomb. Well focused and managed, by its very nature it could become a highly human and hopeful exercise, because there would be nothing as just as a great social conglomerate that is able to receive new members in circumstances favorable to their fullest development. And there is nothing as inhuman as a society that contributes to population growth with full and clear knowledge the newborn can never lead a dignified life.

CHAPTER IX

Urbanization and Population Overflow in Latin America

The Surge of Megalopolises

According to United Nations estimates, by the year 2,000 there will be 23 cities in the world with more than 10 million inhabitants. Seventeen will be located in the so-called Third World and only in six developed areas. This is a radical change indeed in previously held concepts that megalopolises were the result of advanced societies.

The growth of Latin American cities, particularly the capitals, accelerated right after the last world war and then bolted to become an almost insoluble problem. Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Lima, Bogota and Caracas are among the world's 99 cities which by far surpass 2 million inhabitants. It is further estimated that by the year 2,000, both Mexico City and Sao Paulo will reach the 24 million mark, that Buenos Aires and Rio will have around 13.5 million inhabitants, Lima will approach 10 million, Bogota, 7 million and Caracas, 5 million.

It should be emphasized that some of these cities grew fifteen times in four decades between 1948 and the present time. As if wanting to emulate themselves unconsciously, the fact that more millions piled upon millions in urban areas became a sign of national preeminence or commercial and industrial activity. But due to prevailing conditions of underdevelopment, slums proliferated overnight.

Human settlements in the region's metropolitan areas create a growing vicious circle. As urban population increases, the chances of finding solutions decrease in direct proportion because more people mean greater problems and more acute fiscal and budgetary shortages for government agencies in charge of planning and implementing solutions. For such resources are contingent on the ability or failure to tax new settlers.

Some cities in Latin America are flooded with as many as 500 migrants per day. If each one of them were assigned two square meters of living space to live - in inhuman conditions to boot-, the city would have to build 1,000 square meters of housing every day. This means that a new city block is required per week to accommodate the latest arrivals. Where are the resources to build 52 new blocks of housing per year and service them with access roads, transportation systems, water and electric power, education, health and recreation? To build a 52-block village or city quarter in one year is a tough task anywhere in the world, particularly in poor nations like most of Latin America.

From Poverty into Misery

The population of most cities is swelled by internal migration. After the Second World War, peasants who had worked the land for generations were strongly attracted by the mirage of a better life if they moved from the country to the city. This process was encouraged by the first pioneer migrants who returned home to the country and boasted about new-found success and improved status in the city.

Before the fear of violent action raised its ugly head to speed up migration from rural to urban areas, the prevailing argument in favor was based on seeking a better future for their children. There were few schools in the country and these were usually located far from the homestead where the family struggled to survive. To attend the nearest school meant overcoming work schedules and distances, as well as facing the dangers of muddy roads and bridgeless rivers and creeks in the rainy season. On the other hand, the city proffered more schools, collective transportation, electric power.

Other arguments in favor of migration dealt with home economics. Seen from this angle, for peasants the city held the promise of jobs. They no longer had to rely on the whims of nature, on rain and other climatic factors which lorded over farming. In the city, factories worked during dry and rainy seasons, and manpower was always needed to construct houses and buildings. For the peasant family, including boys about to leave home and go to work, the illusion of jobs was a strong incentive. Furthermore, in the city there were hospitals and medical aid centers located relatively close, thus completing the powerful magnet that the metropolis exerted upon huge masses of population forsaken in the countryside.

When in some Latin American countries violence devastated whole rural areas, cities offered fleeing peasants and their families a modicum of security within collective anonymity and this condition also changed the entire rural family environment. In the city they would not live in isolated and easily identifiable homes exposed to outlaws and others who assaulted defenseless people all the time. Urban congestion meant at least some peace of mind for these newcomers as they became part of the masses. Those who had been peasants for generations changed into slum dwellers in the city.

Initial generations of peasant migrants suffered cruelly as their physical horizons were shortened. From their former, almost limitless vistas, now they had to adapt to crowded hovels. But after all, they rationalized, this was only temporary until they found jobs and could move into real homes. Children born in the city became used from infancy to terribly cramped living conditions. For them the countryside was but a fantasy in the lips of their parents or grandparents deeply marked by nostalgia.

Morally and socially, life in the city frequently meant promiscuity and crime. Economically, the city turned most peasants into paupers, while in the country they had led modest but dignified lives.

Impossible Planning

Congestion and conglomeration of people in big cities have resulted in disarray and improvisation. From the governmental point of view, tidal waves of peasant migration have overflowed all planned response. Such large masses of newcomers multiply needs and create bottlenecks in attempting to implement solutions. In a matter of hours they build their own tin-roofed huts as squatters on any available land, and a few days later they improvise links to water and electric power utilities in violation of municipal regulations.

As a historical footnote, in the 1940's the first migrants filled to capacity rooms and nooks of old houses in the urban center of each city. Those who arrived later settled in outlying areas, where emergency squatter towns mushroomed overnight. Most of these lands belonged to rural land owners who had hoped to enrich themselves by developing them through duly-planned housing projects as city limits expanded.

Such uncontrolled growth rolling like the tide over more and more acres represents an overwhelming challenge even for veteran urban planners. Many squatters' villages are built on steep foothills or in low flood lands, where the rainy season unleashes deadly catastrophes which require emergency aid to save lives and salvage whatever little property there is.

Budgetary resources are hardly sufficient to service, even occasionally, slums surrounding the city with water and electric power, not to speak of telephone. To install sewage systems has been even more difficult. Because most cities in Latin America have traditionally lacked adequate drainage facilities, for years we have seen streets torn upside down to replace the city's pipes and ducts so as to take care of ever-growing population.

Urban mismanagement deteriorates dramatically under pressures caused by the proliferation of slums and squatters' belts around the city in what used to be outlying suburbs. Because Latin America did not follow the pattern of European cities which first grew and then declined intermittently as result of the plague, war or loss of influence, factors which forced most of the population to seek new horizons.

Some government officials and politicians believe the solution to alleviate such serious needs is to resort to domestic and foreign credit, particularly the latter. This is how, according to each country's legal and administrative rules, municipal authorities in each major city followed the example of the nation and the provinces and embarked upon indebtedness. They felt a shot of capital would remedy the problem of supplying housing and public utilities. But as the debt mounts, such services do not improve meaningfully and solutions are as unreachable as ever.

Most slum dwellers are overwhelmed by the limitations of their existence. Their life is a constant process of decay, each day further from redemption and closer to despair. They survive in hovels without essential utilities or minimum comfort, yet some boast electrical appliances, TV antennas and even rusty old cars that can hardly manage the uphill ride home. For such individuals the call to violence seems the only and last hope: through relation, they expected to reach a promised land of milk and honey.

Informal Economy

This process of historic development in Latin American cities explains why at the end of the 20th century this continent is home to a so-called **informal or barefoot economy**. This is made up by hoards of vendors proffering goods on the sidewalks in front of commercial establishments; massive groups of young girls and women who traditionally perform domestic services; micro-entrepreneurs who run small businesses and workshops; transportation carriers who still use animal power; sundry salesmen who hawk merchandise in public squares; even confidence men and loan sharks, magicians and quacks. All of them reflect a realistic and picturesque image of the countries of the continent. According to recent studies, in some countries such informal economy employs as much as 40% of the work force.

It would seem as if informal economy is a new euphemism to describe poverty. However, this phenomenon is really quite complex because it reveals institutional rather than economic deterioration.

Informal economy is not traditional poverty as known in Latin America, but rather a new way to eke out a living outside economic structures sanctioned and regulated by the state. It is made up mainly of groups that started up the ladder of development when there were hopeful signs for the future through investment and temporary relief for the economic plight of some countries. But shortly thereafter, they were forced to go the informal way when traditional channels of employment and production collapsed.

Some of these sectors are composed of **middle class groups** impoverished as a result of the impact of the world economic crisis upon this continent. They are, for instance, professionals trained to work at institutions, organizations or state bureaucracies who could not join them and instead were forced to resort to ingenuity and to make good with their scant worldly possessions. They are also employees who were fired from their jobs and decided to use their experience and scant capital setting up small business to meet their families' growing needs, enlarged by the overall climate of constant inflation and devaluation. As it happens with the traditionally poor, these classes gradually developed their own cultural guidelines.

Overall, these groups feel their greatest enemy is the state, all-absorbing in its goal to control them through taxation. Often they feel frustrated and angry at the endless paperwork required by the state and its evident lack of understanding. Their second enemy is organized business, the big and powerful who have plenty of credit and capital, and are allied to financial interests and dependent upon them. In short, those who run the economy and the country.

This is why the proliferation of so-called informal sectors of the economy, provided they are made up by groups having some degree of education, as well as abundant ingenuity and entrepreneurship, contributes to ever-widening contradictions between the state and society. It also emphasizes how present forms of governments are incapable and even useless. A clear estrangement is thus created between what is now called **civil society**, on the one hand, and **state-government**, on the other. This leads to a new approach of considering problems on these terms and endowing them with fresh content and meaning more germane to reality on this continent.

The value of informal economy lies in its great potential for change and in the new horizons it opens. One of them is to strengthen mini-organizations, small institutions, provincial and regional agencies **vis-a-vis** centralism in government. Such centralism was the unhappy legacy which most of the continent received as result of the Wars of Independence and countless civil wars during the 19th century.

If someone wishes to see a complete picture of reality in Latin America - even some Latin Americans who still are not familiar with it - they should walk down streets crowded with vendors, visit slums and squatters' villages, and see belts of poverty around cities. They will witness how far these scenes are from statistical figures and demographic averages as they appear in voluminous reports published by governments and development agencies. Only the squatter who has built a hovel on a hillside experiences the anguish of knowing his home can roll down the creek when the rains come, or suffering from thirst in the dry season. Only those who operate in the informal economy know how devastating is to exist outside society just to earn their daily bread. These people really feel how distant governments loom and how unreal are the ideals of peace, liberty and democracy.

CHAPTER X

Mass Communications in Latin America

The Media Explosion

One of the most meaningful developments that has taken place in Latin America in recent years is the explosion of mass media. Quite poignantly, some researchers describe absolute poverty in a Latin American home at the end of the 20th century **as not possessing even a radio**. So deeply embedded in the masses is the invasion of electronics and the transistor revolution that the whole continent has already become the "global village" described by McLuhan. That is, an environment of permanent interaction and interlinkage created by what the radio says, the press, prints, and television, shows; up to the latest minute and for everyone.

Changes brought about by the electronic explosion in the media are indeed profound and affect all segments of the continent's social framework. This is especially true regarding social and cultural values. Media have introduced new ways of looking at religion, making politics, getting to know both national and international leaders, understanding one's country, exalting personal values, using free time, enjoying leisure, awakening nationalism, observing nature, learning from science and technology. But most of all, the media have encouraged illusions and created great expectations and hopes. They endow modern society with its temporal and provisional nature at a time of relentless change. Paradoxically, it seems as if in a society dominated by social mass media, the only permanent factor is change itself.

One of the functions of the media is to supply information. This is usually done through radio and television newscasts that keep the global village permanently and intermittently informed about what is going on. Media also mould public opinion and collective and social consciousness; they are also quite effective in divulging trends and fashions. Media turn sports into a daily drama of competition; they create and destroy **stars** and **heroes**; through radio and television soap operas, they add excitement to everyday reality; they look retrospectively at history and convert it into current events; they create images of the world and nature and introduce into the home countries, places, events, heroes, persons, ecological facts, exotic landscapes, wildlife, advances of scientific discoveries, political highlights, technological progress. At the same time these images enlarge the vision of the world and reduce it to manageable and understandable terms. They also convey abstruse, mysterious and unusual phenomena, theories and situations. To a universe of listeners and viewers with no experience with such new systems of communication, saturation of messages produces mental **obtuseness**, a state in which it is difficult to distinguish fiction from fact.

Media are great disseminators of **lifestyles**. They show how to follow different lives. They highlight multiple values, types of behavior, cultures and attitudes. They contribute to a pluralist and broad vision of the world which cannot be dulled by daily monotony and routine. They create expectations which in most cases cannot be reached and define new social goals that hopefully can be achieved.

Creation and expansion of communications media in Latin America have followed the same path as in industrialized countries. The history of **journalism** goes back to colonial days with its handbills and the first periodic gazettes which, besides reporting mainly on economic and scientific matters, were used as communication channels by various patriot groups seeking independence and also as molders of public opinion. The press has made substantial contributions in support of political parties and also to disseminate each country's own values. In sum, it has played a vital role in consolidating nationalism.

Ever since its introduction, **radio** has become the major communications medium, as befits Latin America's traditional regard for the spoken word. Radio broadcasts news and information. It incites the audience's imagination with dramatized soap operas in which listeners identify with the characters and share the loves, hates and passions expressed by each player. Radio is also the great communicator of both native and trendy music, and has contributed on a grand scale to popularizing and interchanging folk music throughout the continent. It is also a means to disseminate culture and has been tried on a small scale as teaching vehicle in programs of formal and non-formal education.

The radio mobilizes communities, helps in promoting and implementing campaigns for improvement, sponsors community organizations; in sum, it's an ideal medium for all kinds of social movements, whether they are political, religious, civic or community-oriented. It is the great broadcaster of sports and in this context has promoted football, basketball, baseball and bicycle racing.

The radio is the constant companion of Latin American men and women in their daily activities, from the time they awake until they go to sleep. It's as much a part of the environment as climate, temperature, humidity or wind. In every country there are all kinds of radio stations and antennas, from the smallest to the most powerful. In some places so many stations have proliferated that you could not listen to all of them in a year even if you changed the dial every day. All imaginable systems and styles of radio production have been tried out and exploited on the continent, including shows with informal - and frequently emotional - audience participation.

Television has also entered the Latin American stage with its powerful influence. As in the case of press and radio, television has become a major medium of information, entertainment, recreation and education, and its development has followed the expansion of electric power. Already entrenched in the big metropolitan centers, it has now reached even the most isolated places provided they are have links to electric power. Its programming and content, constantly reflects big city values. A high, though variable, percentage is made up of programs produced in industrialized countries which, therefore, help to disseminate the latter's values and culture. This type of exposure has been further promoted due to the meager resources of domestic social media which jeopardize production and distribution of native programs.

The influence of TV is enormous when it comes to creating awareness of the world, the continent and the country because it shows news as they occur. With such immediate image and physical presence, distances become shorter and the needs of all members of society are enhanced. Whenever TV irrupts into rural communities and isolated groups, it changes not only their values but endows life with new rhythm. The peasant goes to bed later and possibly tends to get up also later. TV disseminates lifestyles, creates expectations, entertains and makes people see life with different eyes.

Recently **videos** have been introduced into the marketplace and their popularity has grown quickly. They too have become a major recreational, artistic, cultural and educational medium. Through marketing techniques, now they constitute another consumer product available to large urban majorities.

Motion picture production in Latin America has been concentrated on a few countries like Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, where films have wide audiences. However, as happens worldwide with the popularity of motion pictures made in Hollywood and Europe, this medium has not achieved real influence in mass communications at the native level. Films are still very popular and movie houses are constantly filled to capacity in towns and cities.

Advertising, which supports major social media, has become extremely sophisticated and attractive. It acts as a catalyst for using such media in Latin America. Firstly, it has expanded markets and placed modern technological advances at the disposal of growing sectors of the continent. Advertising, as a tool of marketing, works on behalf of economic growth. But it can also play a cultural role by reaching into the individual's mentality to influence habits, customs, behavior patterns, traditions, motivations and beliefs. Therefore its most important long-term effect has to do with change in values and ways of thinking, a factor which should allow Latin America to effectively join cultural and technological progress.

The theater, puppet shows, musical groups, orchestras, and cultural centers are also part of the region's life, together with so-called **minor** or **alternate media** (periodicals, posters, flyers, brochures, visual presentations and so on). These convey ideas, concerns, and innovative movements, and also reflect the collective feelings, anxieties, worries, ideals and hopes of the men and women who inhabit the continent.

The explosion of the media is felt with excitement and interest in cities as well as villages, hamlets and even the most isolated backwoods all over Latin America. This continent is communicated and inter-communicated by the media. Yet some barriers still persist, not only in a physical sense. These are mainly political and social. They emphasize the vast differences that still separate these countries from each other.

Concern and Methods of Diversion

In the context of the great problems that plague popular masses in Latin America, it must be admitted that the media have been used not only to inform, educate and divulge, but also to **divert awareness from reality.** This is usually done through events that attract large amounts of spectators, sometimes charged with sentimentalism and false nationalism, which distract the people's attention from their daily siege of real worries.

A few examples will illustrate this point. Latin American history is filled with episodes, both old and new, which fascinate the people and capture their interest. Most have to do with conflicts among their nations due to border disputes, or natural catastrophes which exert heavy toll of death and inflict great sacrifices upon the masses, or with changes of government fraught with hope.

Border disputes in Latin America are as old as these countries, dating back to the 19th century right after winning the wars of independence from Spain. To mention a few, there is the quarrel between Argentina and Chile over the Beagle Canal, settled only recently through the mediation of Pope John Paul II; the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay; countless tensions between Bolivia and Chile, Ecuador and Peru, Colombia and Venezuela, Nicaragua and Colombia, Guyana and Venezuela, not to mention the squabble over the Malvinas or Faulkland Islands, when Argentina declared war against England in April 1982. These examples prove that not only is conflict a common denominator on this continent, but that such quarrels have in fact become chronic, a convenient red herring to invoke every time a country faces pre-electoral agitation, economic breakdown, political crisis, natural disasters, guerrilla activity or failure of social programs. It is then that the media, seeking ever larger audiences, act as sounding board for such aggressive arguments. A belligerent headline or a sensationalist program always sell better than conciliatory talk. Thus it is not rare for the media to support fratricidal causes even if they do not mean to perform such harmful function.

The last few years have witnessed wide debates about the role of the media in disseminating and promoting **violence** in all its forms. There is some evidence pointing to the circumstance that exposure to certain types of programs increases crime rates. Statistics aside, however, it is evident that the media, particularly television, propagate and promote specific attitudes which show little respect for human life and property, law and social order. While it is probable that the producers do not intend to increase these problems, nonetheless, they do it in quest of larger audiences and increased revenue from advertising.

The media can be used constructively and positively, especially during prime time, when they broadcast worldwide sports events (such as the Olympic Games and the World Soccer Cup), beauty contests or concerts by famous artists and orchestras of particular appeal to young people. Minute play by play description of sporting events is so important in these countries that highly specialized narrators and commentators have even developed their own terminology with almost scientific precision to describe actual and potential performances by teams, players and officials; the environment in which competitions take place - whether it is excellent, adequate or in need of repair -; the significance of encyclopedic statistics on all phases of the sport; the physical condition of all concerned; interpretation of the rules and its many implications; and so on. This language is full of neologisms, generalizations and pontifications, delivered on a hypothetical basis and subject to verification by fact.

As true reflection of its reality, Latin America has produced its own screen and television heroes and heroines. Mexico has been fertile in producing such characters. TV soap operas have exalted the common man and woman. Their lives are unspectacular, yet plots revolve around the interests, passions, hopes and frustrations of millions of Latin Americans. As if by magic, they reflect daily survival in forgotten villages, in thriving towns, in slums drowned in the ocean of big cities, in new enterprises that soon go broke, in youngsters gone wrong due to their parents' lack of understanding or to social barriers strictly imposed on their communities. Through such messages, the media disseminate the values of the new Latin American society without having them lose their popular attraction or being disguised under the academic veneer of school teaching.

In sum, communications media can be utilized to broadcast sports events, concerts, soap operas and news, and at the same time disseminate constructive messages so that individuals are motivated to get a better education, to improve themselves, to promote other cultural activities which exalt and shape people, such as art, music, and folklore. They should also support healthy nationalism through patriotic symbols like the flag, the national anthem and various patriotic campaigns. In other words, the media should fulfill their real task, which is that of creators and re-creators.

Educational Media

In this context, let us not overlook the fact that the media have already been employed in Latin America in a pioneering

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effort to educate large masses of the population. Similar efforts in other parts of the world should not be underestimated. In Australia, a continent of vast geographic dimensions and many isolated areas, a child can study all the way from kindergarten to the university through distance education. Similar examples can be cited in other large places like Canada, and even in more industrialized countries with high levels of population density. In Germany, renowned for the quality and development of learning institutions, distance education has also been adopted at the university level. In Japan, a country as progressive as it is heavily populated, the University of the Air conducts its courses over television channels.

None of these developments, however, eclipse the fact that, ever since the beginning of the electronic revolution, serious and well planned steps were taken in Latin America to use the media to complement the learning process both inside formal schools or through methods designed to replace the latter. This was done in areas traditionally isolated by topography, neglected by the state and having little or no public utilities. But these experiments had to be partial and limited, due mainly to lack of financing.

The voice of the teacher speaking daily over the radio, or more recently, his or her presence on the television screen, have been considered heavy programming **"brick broadcasting"** by those who employ the media merely as entertainment vehicles and a business to make money. Indeed, the learning process seems hard as bricks because it involves attention, follow-up, design of learning processes, and assessment. Even if attempts are made to **soften** it through use of familiar media formats (repeated and targeted messages as in commercials, attractive images, outstanding scenery and staging, make-up, quick visual effects, and suggestive treatments), it is not easy to attract and maintain **attention and willingness to learn.** And without these factors, the educational process simply is not possible.

Even such excellent programs like "Sesame Street", produced in the United States by the Children's Television Workshop and known in Latin America through versions dubbed into Spanish and Portuguese, must capture children's attention.

When we speak of education through the media, it doesn't mean that learning occurs inductively and as by magic. True, certain subliminal effects can be induced by media, which change values and modify attitudes. This is part of education in its broadest meaning. But it is no less true that education as the process of learning and acquiring knowledge, values and attitudes gradually and measurably - as well as the application of knowledge and expertise in a technical and controllable manner -requires from the learner the will, effort and discipline to learn. And these prerequisites can be more easily nurtured within the school environment.

Yet worldwide experience, including such Latin American initiatives as the "Escuelas Radiofonicas" ("Radio Schools"), do show that it's also possible to nurture said prerequisites by having the media become part of an interrelated system in order to contribute to the educational process. Results would be greater and better with the support of interpersonal communicators and group inter-action structures in which the media are utilized as media and nothing else.

The future is promising and holds **great hope**. As mass communications media multiply their potency and take advantage of revolutionary technological advances like computers and satellites, the universal goal of education for all is now within our reach.

CHAPTER XI

The Utopia of Education

Criticism and Self-Criticism

One of the most consistent and meaningful efforts by Latin American governments in the post-war era, in order to implement constitutional precepts - at least at the level of **intentions** not always supported by facts - was to expand educational facilities for all school age children. This effort, however, was plagued by unsatisfactory results and, at the social level, frustrations have been even greater.

There are many explanations for this sort of **Utopia of Education**. One of the most significant is the uncontrolled population growth. We should also mention increases in the cost of maintaining and operating the education system, where investments generate only long-term effects. Thus they become less attractive when attempting to reap quick political profit.

Other factors have contributed to the sensation of having failed through formal education as reflected in negligible results. For instance, lack of teachers training facilities, textbooks and teaching aids, inadequate curriculums, poor condition of schools and colleges, and generally, the ever-present **bureaucracy** that has impaired quality in the performance of educational personnel such as teachers, professors, administrators and others.

This situation is aggravated by the fact that teaching has always demanded great sacrifices and much devotion. The teacher's function is becoming ever more complex, difficult and demanding due to the social environment which surrounds most of the pupils, subject to accelerated and social imbalances, to the technological explosion and to pathological phenomena such as drug addiction.

Another negative factor is the chasm that exists between efforts in education and growing unemployment. In the last few years this has affected precisely those segments with higher levels of education. The illusion has been shattered that a diploma automatically ensures entry into the work force and that formal and academic teaching by itself opens, as if my magic, the door to all kinds of opportunities to make money and improve social status. This is perhaps one of the most painful facets of the utopia of education which has been forced upon governments, groups of leaders and society in general.

To make matter worse, improved levels of scholarship and academic education have not stopped the process of deterioration and loss of traditional values. In many cases, instead they have speeded up this process. This is true regarding contempt for discipline, authority and mutual respect, promotion of certain factors of social dissolution which endanger not only the lives of individuals and groups, but of institutions and society as well. This is due to false or misguided concepts of freedom, individualism, egalitarianism and the apparently innate kindness of the human spirit.

It seems contradictory to arrive at such a diagnosis after having defended the basic argument of education as an essential tool and indispensable condition to improve the quality of life and find solutions for most of the problems of society. But it would not be realistic to insist on the merits of education without recognizing limits and problems created within society by current and conventional teaching methods. Therefore, **educational self-criticism** is a basic prerequisite to improve and refine teaching systems.

In this process of self-criticism, new thought must be given to the intentions of formal education. It is clear that education must have much broader objectives than being a springboard into the job market or a means to climb up the social ladder.

Both do have relative importance. Possibly they must be understood in a new dimension.

As a matter of fact, in a world of rapid change in economic structures, where technology replaces human functions and new needs and different priorities crop up, it is necessary to educate for change. Therefore, one of many new goals is to establish curriculums and methodologies that will let individuals adapt to new circumstances and to **recycle** (if we may use this new term) their knowledge and refine their capabilities.

Furthermore, we should consider that opportunities to land steady and well-paying jobs lag behind the dynamism required by the growth of population. In fact, due to economic and financial factors and to the application of new technology, such opportunities actually diminish, making it imperative to redirect education so as to create awareness and conditions of self-employment as a viable alternative to social problems created by rising unemployment.

It should be emphasized that integral human fulfillment is education's broadest goal. We cannot ignore this, even if the prevailing trend has been to focus education primarily as training in specific tasks, capabilities and expertise, as well as to the solution of immediate problems.

Education as integral fulfillment should cover the individual as a whole. Besides, of course, including management and refinement of capabilities, it should also develop intelligence. It should cover the acquisition of knowledge, but also create permanent aptitudes for research and analysis to learn to judge and criticize in a correct and thoughtful manner. It relates to memory as well as to will, which is probably the most decisive human trait because it turns man into a social being able to perform adequately in various roles and functions which must be carried out for his benefit and that of others. Education opens new vistas on how nature must be understood and managed, and contributes to refining baser feelings to embrace aesthetic joys and appreciate the creations of art. True education turns men and women into **leaders** in their respective fields, able to direct and express opinions, to **assume responsibilities** and to improve their world.

There is need for self-criticism in education as a way to update and refine teaching systems to meet the needs and features of society as it grows increasingly complex, overflows with conflict and suffers even from **open aggression.** This soul-searching will help to discern the real meaning of education and thus assess just how far it has deviated from its true path due to problems and limitations already explained.

Educational Trends in Recent Decades

In the 1950's, regional conferences of Ministers of Education set quantitative goals, in many instances far too ambitious and beyond the realm of possibility for most countries. Yet they formed the foundation for expanding educational coverage in subsequent periods.

During the early post-war period, higher education enrollment increased at a faster rate than in secondary level and this, in turn, exceeded primary schooling.

Later, however, new concepts of development and the growing egalitarian spirit of the governments changed the emphasis of education and placed it on **democratization**; meaning the opening of educational opportunities for all, especially for school age children from low income families. Those years saw the strengthening of primary education as evidenced by the substantial number of schools that were built, the growth of enrollment and the large contingent of teachers who were appointed.

Initial efforts on behalf of educational development in the 60's were directed mainly at expansion of coverage and did not include major changes in content. Several trends appeared, however, such as emphasis on national identity and growing concern about the educational system's capacity to cope with the demand that grew from day to day.

At the time it also seemed important to broaden the concept of development beyond purely economic production. For this reason, in 1970 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a new concept of development as supplying growing opportunities for the entire population of the world to lead a better life. It was imperative, therefore, to expand and improve facilities in education, health, housing, social welfare and environmental protection. This development approach seeks to improve the quality of life among the people through programs and services to curtail poverty, malnutrition, illness, illiteracy. But for these measures to have real impact, they must not be considered solely as services for marginated populations, but as the nucleus of a comprehensive development program for all people.

At the end of the 60's and beginning of the 70's, educational development plans were less geared to previously held quantitative priorities, and more to qualitative features, such as concern with social equality, emphasis on teaching sciences, relevance of education to each country's needs and increase of national capabilities in the way of educational research and administration. The main goal became mental development and intelligence, and those concerned saw the need to extend teaching systems to include children from 0 to 5 years of age. Thus the spotlight was placed on pre-school learning.

Emphasis on primary education and expansion and diversification of secondary schooling so typical of those years now make it imperative to re-think and re-orient the tertiary sector in education.

Latin America is living the generational explosion of the 60's. The cohort of youths in their 20's, for whom educational efforts in previous decades created greater learning opportunities in primary and middle levels, are now pressuring for better and more post-secondary facilities in technical and higher learning. This implies that emphasis must again be placed on university level education.

At the same time it must be admitted that higher education is now limited in its functional results by unemployment, specifically of those with higher education. Hence the need to rethink the objectives of higher education and to open the doors to technical learning as an unavoidable way out to the dilemma.

From the point of view of education, the final years of the present century pose special features, most of them contradictory. As UNESCO has recognized it in formulating the so-called "Main Project", by the year 2000 the continent should have eradicated illiteracy. While this has been greatly reduced, its shadow still darkens Latin America. It is also necessary to attain full enrollment at the primary level. Statistics show this has also progressed, but "universality" is yet to be attained. Post-secondary structures have to be modified and re-thought to make way for real technological education. Furthermore, if the continent aspires to play a leading role in the contemporary world, a decisive and comprehensive effort is required to support now inchoate and even deficient trends in favor of post-graduate education and more opportunities for scientists and technicians in post-doctorate years.

Limited Coverage of the Educational System

On December 10, 1948, the United Nations adopted its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 26 says: "Everyone has the right to education. Elementary education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and education shall be accessible to all on the basis of merit." Furthermore, many Latin American constitutions provide for the State to offer "free and compulsory education to all citizens". Yet, four decades later in Latin America this goal has not been attained.

There is great disparity between supply and demand of educational services, particularly in countries with accelerated rates of population growth.

For a long while education was equated with mere schooling between theoretical ages, let's say 7 to 22-24 years. This supposition grows less valid with time. In fact, education is viewed today as a permanent process beginning before birth and extending until death. Besides, education has no limitations; due to rapid technological advances, there are always new lessons to be learned. If education is viewed this way, the demand of teaching services is even greater to take care of the entire population.

Chart Number 3, with figures estimated in 1985, is a summary of limited formal education coverage in Latin America.

While enrollment has increased in the last few years, there are still many school-age children who do not go to school. This contradicts statistics because these show a rate of enrollment in primary school of over 100%. However, there is a reason behind this figure: it is real as to the number of enrolled pupils at primary level - over 61 million - but it includes not only repeat students over 11 years old, but also adults who attend night school to validate primary learning. This misleading figure hides the cruel reality that can be seen everywhere in the vast Latin American continent: children unable to attend school.

According to this chart, current educational systems take care of less than half of the 12 to 17 years old and only 18% of the 18 to 24 years old. These facts illustrate the tremendous task that still lies ahead just to solve the quantitative problem of educational coverage. Percentages of enrollment are much lower than in developed countries and, more than anything else, they indicate the reality and meaning of underdevelopment.

Also inadequate is adult education with little or no formal previous schooling. While illiteracy decreased in Latin America from 70% in 1950 to less than 30% in 1987, absolute figures have not diminished. If the population keeps on growing at present rates, and no additional resources are provided for education, the number of illiterates will increase by the year 2,000, contrary to the wishes and purposes of UNESCO and the governments of the region.

This phenomenon threatens not only a more equitable distribution of the benefits of progress, but development itself; because education provides knowledge and expertise needed in communications, sciences, mathematics and other disciplines required in today's economic systems. Vocational training improves the workers' productivity, and any level of training requires at least some basic education. Skilled workers are, of course, more capable and can be retrained for new technology. Therefore, some kind of low-cost functional education must be given high priority so the population can at least obtain certain basic learning to effectively participate in the life of the nation.

POPULATION IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM
(Thousands) ■

Adults (50+)	
Adult Educ. (35-50)	1,600
Postgraduate, Cont. Educ. (25-34)	2,800
Higher Educ. (18-24)	8,600
Secondary Educ. (12-17)	26,600
Elementary Educ. (6-11)	50,500
Preschool (3-5)	6,000
Total	96,100

POPULATION OUT OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM
(Thousands) ▭

Adults (50+)	58,200
Adult Educ. (35-50)	55,000
Postgraduate, Cont. Educ. (25-34)	48,700
Higher Educ. (18-24)	39,900
Secondary Educ. (12-17)	27,100
Elementary Educ. (6-11)	8,800
Preschool (3-5)	71,200
Total	308,900

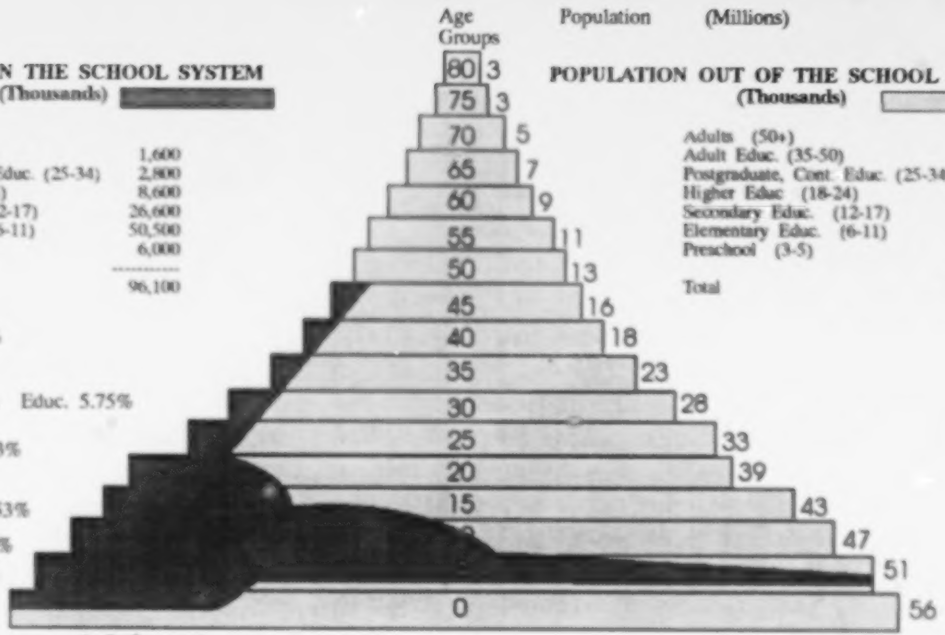

Chart No. 3

School System Coverage - Latin America, 1985

Source: Banco Mundial. Informe sobre El desarrollo Mundial, 1988
Washington: 1988

Education and Work

To be effective, the educational system has to provide linkage of vocational training and schools with work opportunities. This means education must be planned in order to define what must be taught to prepare students for future jobs, as well as what is to be expected from teaching inside and outside the classroom.

A work force trained to manage technical and administrative problems is one of the essential prerequisites for economic growth. In view of accelerated technological advances, today this poses an even greater problem for developing countries than in previous years when gradual evolution was the keynote.

The majority of Latin American countries lack trained personnel in different tasks, both administrative and technical, related to economic growth. Deficient education and training occurs simultaneously with unemployment among graduates because their learning has no demand as long as current social conditions prevail. Also, the chasm that exists between educational environment and practical experience prevents deficiently trained students from performing well if and when they get jobs.

There is serious unemployment in the modern economic sector, as well as among graduates and school drop-outs. Unemployment rates in Latin America fluctuate between 10% and 15%, substantially higher than in industrialized countries. There is also underemployment which, as is well-known, has grave consequences, among them low productivity due to lack of motivation to excel.

Legislators and employers, as well as employees and people in general, consider a diploma in formal education as a passport to work in the modern economic sector. But, in the face of unemployment, recent studies show that young people's educational goals now reflect market conditions instead of personal aspirations and inclinations. To increase their work potential, students try to extend the learning process as long as possible, and, therefore, sometimes they become over-qualified for available jobs. This insistence on higher qualifications reinforces even further the trend in education not to prepare for medium-level intermediary careers, but to aim to ever higher levels.

To balance education and work, action is required to increase and diversify job sources, rationalize prerequisites for qualification, and change the offer and nature of opportunities in education. The former two are germane to the countries' economic development while the latter is strictly related to education.

The informal economy sector in Latin America includes a large percentage of the work force in urban areas. A substantial part of this segment has relatively easy access to the work force due mainly to demand for local products, vocational training accomplished outside the formal school system, larger opportunities for self-employment and intensive work production, small-scale operations, non-regulated market conditions, very low levels of profit and relatively simple requirements as to skills.

In most countries there are no specific policies or programs to cover vocational training in the informal sector. In some places such activities are even underestimated, and this attitude conspires against the establishment of adequate training programs. These are urgent because large masses of population eke out a living through the informal economy.

Administrative Incompetence

The accelerated expansion of educational systems in each country in the last four decades has placed heavy demands on those who direct and administer them. Notwithstanding efforts to satisfy those demands, the development of directive, administrative, managerial and analytical capabilities has still a long way to go in order to take care of the growing size and complexity of the educational task.

In many countries, educational administration is deficient and based on inadequate and non-functional systems. Frequently the power to make decisions is not clearly established within institutions in charge of education and training, or within local authorities, community groups and schools. Furthermore, educational planning at the central government level usually devotes more time to expanding and handling administration than to improving the quality of education.

Research and experimentation in education have not been sufficiently valued. And without these elements as guidelines, it is extremely difficult to make decisions, to plan, and above all, to adopt new policies and make changes.

The wish to accomplish quick development in many ways similar to that of more affluent countries has deeply influenced leaders in developing countries. And this has prevented the creation of original and viable models, as well as adaptable to each country's needs. This has happened in all areas, but it is particularly poignant in education. In sum, whether in quality or quantity, educational systems are not a proper foundation for national development. In some Latin American countries, tradition continues to rule in linking educational systems with outmoded European models. These are simply not valid to implement the region's development.

The establishment of educational policies must be flexible and meet the needs of developing efficient formal and non-formal systems in accordance with each social structure. The system must increase learning opportunities to less privileged groups, now alienated from their country's social and economic life. This includes education for the poor, for school drop-outs, for women, for rural populations and for indigenous groups. Also, for education to be efficient, it must provide better opportunities for transition from school to work.

If the goal is quicker and fairer economic growth, education must support action in other fields, such as agriculture, health, nutrition, employment. Within an integrated context, education will contribute effectively to foment and consolidate the countries' potential and assure the people a productive role in the development process.

In reviewing educational development throughout the continent, it must be admitted that, as result of trends already described, learning systems have been improved and extended to sectors of the population not previously benefited by them. Serious efforts have been made to improve the efficiency of educational systems, both as to quality and quantity, and turn them more relevant to the country's needs, as well as to its culture and idiosyncracies. The administration of education has been strengthened and in many countries departments of planning and research have been created to take care of the sector's growing complexity. But in spite of these advances, most Latin American countries still face problems that conspire against progress.

Many and multiple measures are required to adequate educational systems to the pressing needs of a society that grows each day more complex and, in some instances, is on the brink of dissolution. What seems more important and basic is to restore to education its fundamental and irreplaceable functions to mould human beings integrally, as indispensable medium to fulfill each individual's potential, and as instrument to perfect men and women as social beings. Thus it can turn society into a living, healthy, and productive organism to achieve human ideals. This is the road to transform the ideal of education into reality.

CHAPTER XII

Causes of Causes and Incomplete Solutions

Good Intentions

Following scientific thought at the time, when the structure of the modern state evolved in the 17th and 18th centuries, the manner of dealing with problems was divided into chapters, and ministries were set up to take care of society's major needs. Therefore, within the framework of the state, besides ministries dealing with interior and foreign matters, there were others concerned with the economy, agriculture, health, industry and education.

This way of conceiving public administration, still in force today, follows epistemological principles adopted in previous centuries. According to these, in Ackoff's opinion, "a complete problem was usually broken down into simpler problems, each pertaining to a specific discipline. Then each discipline solved its part of the problem and solutions were assembled into a comprehensive solution." The theory underlying this approach is that each problem may be isolated from the whole and dealt with independently.

Perhaps this was valid enough during certain periods of history less inter-dependent and complex than the present. But today, in the age of great strides in computer science, each problem, subject and issue must be seen as part of a larger and more complex whole. Isolated solutions tend to be incomplete and to complicate matters even more. Such is the story of so many good intentions that resulted in greater difficulties and led to unmanageable situations.

A List of Incomplete Solutions

A most telling example of incomplete solutions is a long series of attempts at land reform. Political groups of both left and right acknowledge the failure of such intentions. Some refer to the lack of determination in carrying out bold reforms that would really change social structures and foment new solidarity among different communities. Others support their opposition with the irrefutable argument that when people unable to cultivate the land with proper technological means take over agriculture, production decreases and productivity is jeopardized. Furthermore, such new landholders lack capital and machinery and must work the soil in a proliferation of small individual plots.

Another example are so-called housing projects which seek a collective solution for a problem that haunts millions of people in Latin America. Construction has been used as catalyst to stimulate the economy because it can employ vast masses of workers with little or no investment required for vocational and technical training. It has also a multiplier effect on subsidiary and complementary enterprises. Results show that the number of housing units built is substantial, but never enough to meet the need. Basic figures on housing shortages remain stationary. It seems as if the growing number of houses built cannot keep up with the throngs of potential dwellers. Because these projects must be built in cities that attract internal migration, newer and vaster urban problems crop up as result of over-population and lack of public utilities. On the social level, the links of family solidarity are lost and thus improving the quality of life becomes an unattainable goal.

Similar situations prevail in other social development plans; for instance, integrated rural development; vaccination, literacy and nutritional campaigns; programs of mental improvement; plans to promote do-it-yourself construction and cottage industries; construction of new schools, health centers and other infrastructure facilities; programs on behalf of the rights of women, Indians and other minorities; motivation for the protection of the environment; orphanages, child care centers, old peoples' homes and programs for the elderly. All of these are equally important, and experiments carried out along these lines have been inspired by good intentions. Yet they failed or proved inefficient because they did not take into account the complex social and economic fabric, or because no parallel measures were taken to attack the causes of the problem. Goals should have been approached with a clear vision of what was feasible, avoiding implementation within paternalistic concepts which prevent real and active participation by beneficiaries.

The list of incomplete solutions is equally lengthy in the economic field. They include efforts to maintain a healthy currency and fight inflation; tax reform and measures for a fairer distribution of revenues; policies to push output in industry and other basic sectors; creation of regional common markets; and many others. The list is endless. These programs, projects and measures were absolutely necessary and became part and parcel of the daily life of nations, as well as expressions of development. Yet they failed, or lacked proper control or powers of achievement and recovery, because they ignored limits imposed by complex social and cultural factors.

Causes Behind Causes

Pointing at failings rather than at results leads to analyzing causes, a really important exercise, even though this way of looking at things might seem pessimistic.

Aristotle, the father of logic, said the cause of causes is the cause of the caused. This means every human event has origin in facts, and these in turn are originated by other, prior facts. In other words, causality is a chain of factors implied and inter-linked in such a way that, when solution is required for one of the effects, important generating factors may be overlooked at the time of diagnosing it. Thus solutions tend to be incomplete.

For instance, when a genuine effort is made on behalf of homeless children, **some** of them are actually helped, but nothing is done to eliminate the problem of abandoned children itself. This is caused by conflict at home, break-up of the family, and irresponsible procreation. What is even worse, when the state institutionalizes aid to homeless children, in a way it is encouraging the overall evil because then the family feels relieved in discharging one of its major responsibilities. This does not mean services for homeless children should be eliminated, but that both charity organizations and the state must adopt policies and take steps to uproot the causes of the problem which, in this instance and as in others, requires action in education.

It's much harder to establish the chain of causality in economic matters. The struggle for healthy currency has top priority because it represents the value of economic factors, among them labor. Salaries and wages of workers and employees represent the value of their work. If currency loses value and wages remain the same, what really loses value is labor. Measures in defense of monetary value are really adopted to control money in circulation. The state must watch at all times not only over the issue of new money, but also over the volume and speed with which it moves and reproduces, so as to avoid overflowing the economy itself. All this is both desirable and required, but it becomes a merely mechanical solution. By not addressing the real causes of the problem, it tends to create partial solutions. These, in many cases, make conditions worse and normally fail to produce long-term results.

Instead of having the state, the entrepreneurial sector, economic groups and even labor unions - which are supposed to uphold workers' rights - control the flow and speed of money in circulation, it would be better for them to ask what is the real productivity of labor, meaning the actual value of labor in terms of production.If the honest answer is that labor is **unproductive**, a peculiar feature in developing countries, then why not seek the cause of the caused? This means enhancing vocational training, production, and use of technology in order to improve productivity and thus endow measures in favor of monetary value and fair retribution of labor with positive results.

By this we do not intend to do away with the state's control and supervision systems or with the workers' claims so that capital, as fruit of productive work, should also filter down to the workers as higher wages and better retribution. But emphasis must be placed on productive work to uphold the value of wages and currency so the value of remuneration is also stable and consistent.

With these observations we do not intend to preach new economic theories, but rather to use ideas of common sense guided by elementary logic and help to erase mirages which people do not bother to analyze thoughtfully. Causes must be sought to arrive at the origin of facts.

Education is another area where the chain of causality is important. For instance, in designing literacy campaigns, high priority is placed on the cultural anthropological philosophy which upholds the population's ancestral values. For some theoreticians, it would seem as if each book, each primer, and each educational aid should be designed for each particular individual. This approach is fashionable because it implies theoretical sophistication. Frequently no heed is paid to the motivations of those being taught to read and write; in other words, those simple and direct questions posed by them: "How will I benefit from all this effort, what use will it have for me?" For them, the problem of their own culture and related philosophy is just so much complex and refined theorizing which has no positive or negative effect on their own world. They are, of course, interested in learning to read and write in a useful language that will provide them with new opportunities individually and collectively; in other words, they seek broader horizons and a way out of their multiple problems.

In planning for education, problems must be addressed in integral and integrated manner. For instance literacy campaigns in themselves serve no purpose if they are not implemented with practical and useful reading materials that will open unsuspected horizons to fledgling readers. Unless this is done, illiteracy will return through disuse. Another example takes place at the higher levels of university careers and professional performance, where productivity is often hampered by the lack of intermediate technicians and by the little value given to technical careers in salary and social status.

Another patent case of causality involves specific public health campaigns, for instance, malaria control. That one country should implement a program to eradicate it while neighboring countries do not join in is a useless exercise because carriers of the disease do not recognize other borders besides those of climate and humidity. In this context, if the problem is not faced as a whole, the solution will be ineffective.

Another failure has consisted in proposing solutions apparently effective but which, in reality, only make problems worse. A telling example are foreign aid policies, plans and programs based on the generous, yet false premise, that underdevelopment hinges on the lack of physical and economic resources and, therefore, these should come from abroad. From the outset it is clear that such aid will not be enough, but compromise formulas are adopted to receive help on limited and provisional basis while new sources are found. But these never materialize due to the way these programs were launched. A real assessment of what has transpired in this field in recent years reveals that huge investments and great expectations have reaped relatively meager results.

A fundamental question must be asked: How many of these resources so generously given have been assigned to training and developing human potential, which is essential to generate development? Some believe this is not necessary because **human potential is there and it exists.** Yet this false premise is what accounts for low profitability of capital investments in social projects such as distribution of powdered milk and medicines and construction of health centers, and other infrastructure. These may be worthy, tangible, measurable and politically effective programs, but they do not solve the cause of the problems: lack of training among the people, which is both author and actor in the drama of development.

Each incomplete solution should be examined in the light of this thinking. This is made even easier because in each area involved there are competent experts and in-depth analysts. However, let us not forget that the simplest facts, which also happen to be the most decisive, are frequently ignored.

Vicious Circles and Social Pathologies

In this chapter we have mentioned again and again how problems tend to get worse, and this is also due to the aforesaid chain of causality. Problems are not static. They have the tendency to grow and become insoluble. They are now called social pathologies, because a false solution only enlarges the problem in pathological terms.

When there are natural catastrophes, the people expect solutions to come from the state. Governments, harassed by such emergencies, assume responsibility for housing, food, clothing and health service and they do it on a theoretically provisional basis. But when they hear about these free services, many citizens assume the false role of victims and throng to disaster areas to enjoy **benefits** which rightfully belong to those really affected. So the problem spirals and soon the state is unable to take care of the real victims. And if somehow aid is continued, some of the people who have benefitted and improved their lives even slightly turn into social parasites.

It's a human weakness to elude responsibilities. Therefore, even minor aid that relieves individuals, groups, enterprises, associations and governments from carrying out their responsibilities is harmful and degenerates into vicious circles.

If the government arranges for development loans in favorable conditions, soon it will face increased needs and political pressures and be forced to squander such resources in operating costs instead of investing them in projects originally planned. This is the beginning of what leads to unpayable debts. Besides governments, this happens also to corporations, institutions, groups and individuals.

These pathologies tend to get worse and growingly complex. If to adhere to false respect for human rights a government weakens its authority and ceases to uphold the state of law, it will soon find itself without support in defending the entire legal framework, and the country may experience the first symptoms of social dissolution. A badly solved problem will create a chain of problems because here again the law of causality prevails.

By saying that underdevelopment is the sum of social pathologies, we recognize it as a complex system that reinforces itself. Inflation begets more inflation. Debt generates more debt. Ignorance and poverty produce more misery. Improductive labor increases the cost of living and diminishes the value of effort. Smuggling proliferates in more smuggling. Impunity is the mother of lawlessness. A weak justice system encourages crime. Wantonness stimulates vice. If society were unable to also create chains of positive causes, underdevelopment would soon degenerate into chaos.

The only way out of such vicious circles is to return to the cause of causes, humankind itself. Responsible people create responsible societies. Only **human potential** can generate economic, political and social potential. A society of qualified people will advance and produce more qualified individuals. To be great, a people must think and act greatly.

PART THREE

DEVELOPING HUMAN POTENTIAL: A DOOR OPENS ONTO HOPE

CHAPTER XIII

Education for Living

The Power of Human Potential

Human beings are born with great innate capabilities, with a huge potential to be developed, with almost limitless dormant resources. This is amply proven by artists, inventors, scientists, teachers and others who have excelled as leaders and factors of social advancement. Some were subjected to poverty and negative social environment, yet they conquered adversity and achieved success. Such self-made men and women combined human potential with hard work and constant effort to climb up the ladder of life.

All people are born with certain potential for biologic, human and intellectual growth which reaches peaks and valleys throughout life. Almost all those persons who become role models for others are result of partially tapped capabilities, energy fed by continuous interest and effort, iron will and enormous tenacity.

In modern computer language, it can be said that the central nervous system - more specifically the brain - is the "hardware", the human being's basic instrument or motor. This is indeed complex and has almost boundless potential in its genetic components, which must be given the opportunity to evolve, develop and become more and more receptive to absorbing information supplied by the rest of the world.

Education as personal fulfillment is the end product of human psychobiological functions. Seen this way, it is the fruit of analyzing, processing and summarizing ideas, concepts and experiences which the individual perceives, understands and assimilates through countless sensations and messages from without. It is the result of permanent interchange between live intelligent beings and their environment, a process which teaches through feeling, experience and manoeuvering. Knowledge thus acquired grows through progressive accumulation and exchange of ideas and concepts, values, feelings and sensations which simpler living beings do not possess.

Humankind's huge potential and its advantages over other living beings hinges precisely on the organic and genetic capabilities it has developed to climb to the highest point in the biological scale.

Educational Justice

Human beings rule over their own biogenetic and psychological potential, that is, their capacity to learn as individuals, a potential that is transmitted through their own biological organism. The same applies to society as it develops in a common effort the machinery, techniques, methods and other elements to facilitate and accelerate the learning process in individuals.

With the invention of written symbols, humanity became particularly apt in communicating knowledge to others. Books soon appeared; the library was born. With the printing press, knowledge became public. Gutenberg's revolution put science at everyone's reach. From ancient times teaching had become institutionalized through stable and permanent organizations which nowadays we call schools, colleges and universities. At the same time, systems of administering and controlling the teaching-learning process were developed.

Humankind made a huge stride forward when electronic media was introduced and applied to teaching. From the simplest visual aid to the most complex and sophisticated educational "software", their objective is the same: to educate and train humanity so it will continue its climb upward. This has already led some to reach high levels of quality of life right here on earth; it has placed man in outer space and now is intent on exploring the universe. Continuous and awe-inspiring progress in science and technology has been possible thanks to the enormous potential contained in the human mind and its capacity to investigate, manage and change nature's almost limitless possibilities. Potential plus more potential multiplies in exponential form.

Anthropologists consider the fact that some primitive groups remain untouched by such overwhelming advances in science and technology as proof of subdivisions in the human species. Technological man is indeed quite different from those who still live under primitive conditions. But just how far this results from the growth of human knowledge becomes a debatable and complex issue. It remains, however, one of humankind's main concerns.

Through advances in the media, application of science and technology to the educational process itself, and development and refinement of the human mind from childhood, **educational justice** seems within the grasp of man at the end of the 20th century. This concept has not been sufficiently discussed and analyzed because the term justice is generally used to describe the solution to material inequalities between members of the species to the detriment of an area where deeper inequalities are common, that of development of the intellect.

The Social and Cultural Meaning of Education

Sometimes education is considered as the number of years of learning completed, or as a career certified by a diploma, or as the courses that make up the post-graduate curriculum. All these are part of education, but not all of it. They merely represent certain facets. As rational beings, humans possess an education, they belong to a culture, they have acquired certain knowledge and have made value judgements at all levels and on different subjects; factors which lead to certain types of behavior.

If we regard education as a learning and training process, as the means to partake of humanity's accumulated wisdom and to put into practice each individual's enormous potential, we must recognize it as a right. In the field of rights, education is now considered as a permanent process that cannot be limited to any one time frame. This is the origin of the aphorism **"it's never too late to learn"**, as well as of the concept of **permanent and continuing education.**

Corollary to this definition is the fact that educational action does not always produce quick results. While in general it may yield some immediate results, education has long-term intentions. The infant who learns the alphabet or simple numbers is sowing in his intelligence seeds of self-realization that will bear fruit only when his adult mind is able to solve problems, issue commands and face responsibilities. Years are needed to achieve maturity, it develops slowly, keeping pace with physical growth. We tend to forget and underestimate its importance. Those who as children did not learn to read and write or manage numbers, appreciate better than others the great benefit of acquiring such knowledge at the right time. They also know the terrible limitation of not having it.

So-called adult education, as a remedial device has been introduced to solve social problems created by differences in learning. Its objective is to provide for the needs of persons with educational deficiencies in basic subjects. Adult education, as a means to fill the vacuum created by the lack of proper learning from childhood, is needed to tap human potential, and it should be an integral part of any plans toward this objective.

What Is Education for Living

Training for life should be the first and foremost objective of education as a means to develop human potential in Third World countries, where large masses of the population are victims of poverty, alienation and ignorance. This is indeed the basic target. Education understood as a process of enlightment. A process that removes veils, broadens borders, discovers new horizons, and fills with light the innermost chambers of the human mind.

Such basic education generally aimed at adults deals with life and takes place in life itself. It should be conducted in the same time frame and place as the daily existence of men and women who, for different reasons, cannot go back to formal school. It teaches apparently elementary concepts which nevertheless are transformed into new attitudes and values. They are simple ideas that change human life both in external expressions and in the perception of life and the world around us.

Anyone can tap his or her capabilities to the maximum degree. This requires not only attention to instinctive impulses, but other elements as well. The human individual has feelings and passions, intelligence and memory, capacity to discern, analyze and judge, enlightened freedom of choice and to make good, and will to decide what is to be done.

For this reason the objective of fundamental education for living is to give everyone the minimum amount of elements needed to live in society with dignity and to face a changing environment. This is the foundation on which the entire educational structure is built.

As to content, this type of education teaches how to eat well from the nutritional point of view, how to dress and keep clean, how to fix the home, how to preserve food and purify water.

It is also education aimed at loftier concepts, such as parental conduct with regard to the children, and harmonious relations between spouses and among siblings. It teaches friendship, how to join groups and organizations, speak at public assemblies and meetings, in an open and constructive manner. Also, how to work in cooperatives and benefit from them; how to live in a community; and how to be familiar with politics and participate in political life. It's also the way to act according to rules dictated by one's own beliefs and religious creed; to participate actively and constructively in sports and get the most out of free time in leisure and recreation.

Education for living also means learning to work productively and to organize human effort to improve the quality of life. This means being qualified to produce, spend and save, and knowing how to utilize state services and participate productively in economic institutions. It is also understanding the value of technology and even contributing to its expansion and promotion. Besides, it qualifies the individual to be a critical spectator and user of communications media.

Such education is most respectful of the human person. This is why it covers moral precepts against violence and repression expressed daily in countless murders and ambushes, kidnappings, muggings, riots and indiscriminate, suicidal acts of terrorism. It is also concerned with the generation of life with all the responsibilities it places on those who procreate. It is, therefore, education for and within responsibility.

Education for living is synonymous with respect for nature and awareness that natural resources may become depleted. It's commitment for the construction of a better world which must be nurtured with clear knowledge that if nature is destroyed and natural resources are not protected and conserved, human life itself runs the risk of extinction and society will not survive upon earth.

Education for living is an unparalleled program of social development providing it teaches not only conceptual contents, but how to grasp reasons and investigate causes. Education is not integral in the case of illiterate persons who learn how to spell without knowing what for, or who do not realize that through literacy they acquire a new capability and are granted fresh possibilities to interpret and re-make their own world.

Education for living should be aimed at consolidating values, social discipline, public opinion and nationalistic motivation in order to establish real, dynamic and responsible links between the people and national development. The strengthening of constructive national pride and a climate conducive to the exercise of civil freedoms should be reflected in the decision to participate actively and assume responsibilities as it behooves members of a democracy.

Therefore, what is important is not the sum of positive knowledge acquired (to know how to do something, to know how to behave in a certain way, or to know about specific subjects) but rather to develop a new mentality. This means acquiring a new culture and a different way of looking at the world. It is searching continuously for the reasons and motivations behind human behavior, a search deeply embedded in the thought process of each individual.

Such education goes beyond traditional and conventional concepts. It becomes a real weapon to defeat ignorance, paving the way for profound social change. It is education for cultural expansion in which people act as subjects in the struggle to modify their mentality.

This signifies also learning to see the future and to design it from the present. Because if this type of education fits the present moment and life as it is now, reforming conditions that limit humankind in their vital moment, it cannot remain static. It must look ahead and envision the world as it could be, the world as it will be, the world we want to create, and the world that can be molded by human will.

Because social organization and cultural life are constantly changing, education cannot remain stationary. Minimum requirements for basic survival are similar to those of former times, but not the same. The environment is constantly changing and thus different solutions are required. This is even truer because human beings have the capacity to change, to keep up with the times and to progress.

Education as a human challenge is a valid program. It means multiplying the potential to strengthen humanity and progressive enlightment of the mind, so as to discover new horizons every day. This is a process in which knowledge is accumulated, correlated and systematized, not only through the infinite technological capacity to store and process information and data, but also because man himself has invented, created and institutionalized systems and instruments to increase such capacity.

Because it has the means within its reach, Latin America must react to the historic challenge of creating objective conditions to **develop its human potential.** The continent is now living a crucial moment in its history: decisions made now will shape its future. Either it gets its permanent development process off the ground with improved living standards for the people, or it flounders in overall and progressive impoverishment. Growth calls for a huge collective effort. This is possible only if the people are trained as subjects qualified to participate in the common task.

CHAPTER XIV

Criteria for Planned Education

Towards Hope

The thought of Augustine of Hippo is well-known when referring to the great problems which humankind faces every day. Based on learning from his own life and experience as a man of the world, as well as a saint, he said it was absurd to look for the causes of our problems in external facts when normally solutions were found in the mind and heart of men and women.

To transfer this truthful statement to conditions in Latin America, it must be admitted that the continent has internal means of solving its problems, among these: rich natural, historical and cultural resources, but mainly the **human potential** of its population. If only this capacity could be developed, settling other problems would follow. To treat the affliction only in its consequences is to keep it latent.

Human potential is indeed grandiose. If the spiritual, social, labor and productive forces of 450 million Latin Americans were united in the idea of creating a new world, the effect would be awesome. This would be the best gift to the continent to mark the 500th anniversary of its discovery. Education in the best meaning of the word is the key that will open the door to new hope. But education planned on the basis of novel and realistic criteria, with modern and multiplying strategies as true response to the region's vast problems.

To turn this into reality, political will is necessary and this lies with the ruling groups. It's up to them to decide if Latin America is to discover itself and open new vistas to implement the ideals spoused by many of its historic leaders.

For the **development of human potential**, education must be able to reach everyone and be open to all. These two criteria complement each other: the first refers to coverage or availability, that is, **education for all**; and the second deals with opening up education, and is called **open education**.

Furthermore, quality must prime in education, which has to conform to the community's needs at any given time. **Quality** and **relevancy** therefore become third and fourth criteria to design and implement educational plans and programs.

Education for All

The criterion of education for all, finds expression in different programs. Its objective is to accomplish full enrollment of the school age population. This means solving problems of student quotas and availability of teachers with ever lessening fiscal resources, as well as making changes in the social fabric, so children and youths are not kept away from institutions of learning. These factors have to do with hunger, malnutrition, family break-up, exploitation of minors in child labor, transport and communications, scarcity of school facilities, teaching materials and teachers, just to mention some of the circumstances that affect the situation.

The second facet of the problem is posed by students who drop out of school after a few years. This is a growing phenomenon in the contemporary world and is produced by some of aforementioned social factors. It requires an in-depth study of pedagogic methods as well as of the school environment itself. In our time it is also related to the terrible scourge of drugs and all the problems it creates for society. In sum, education for all requires plans and programs over and beyond any internal changes within the school system having, besides, profound meaning in the process of social change.

Furthermore, modern society must adjust and change constantly due to continuous, major advances in technology. Therefore a system of **continuing education** adopted as an extension of education for all implies that the educational system must serve the entire population at all times. Permanent education means that every citizen has the opportunity to update his knowledge and be retrained during his or her entire life, whether they have completed advanced courses or merely elementary grades. For this reason programs within the context of education for all should also cover adult education and include sectors of the population known in some countries as "the third age".

Open Education

If education for all means opening up the system beyond school-age population to cover every strata and level of the country's population, the concept of open education, which is complementary, implies certain conceptual approaches that enlighten and enrich whatever new plans in education are formulated with an eye in the future.

In physical terms, such opening goes beyond the strict framework of teaching establishments - the school, the college, the university campus. It signifies endowing any situation in life with educational content. Walking down the street or driving over a highway can become educational events. Thus, homes, neighborhoods, cities, parks, stadiums, cinemas and other places may soon recover their educational content. In the broadest meaning, the entire nation becomes a huge school that contributes at all times and in any circumstance to the teaching process and the fulfillment of the human potential.

Traditionally the school system has tended to be closed, both in the physical sense and also in social context. Schools are surrounded by tall walls, colleges build fences, and universities are constricted to their campuses. The system is built so only the most capable can be a part of it and, besides, it rewards solely those who **excel.** It's like a hurdle race which only the strongest can win and thus assure the survival of the fittest. This exclusivist Darwinian approach means losing and wasting countless human resources and it promotes great social injustices. By establishing differences among social classes, it produces closed societies. It increases the number of school drop-outs and misfits within society. It prolongs the privileges of the few within the context of the majority, which tends to behave like masses and not as individuals. This is just the opposite of what the education system should strive for.

The society of masses is the typical result of a closed educational system. On the other hand, open education is the first step toward democratic society. It's open because it allows individuals to progress at their own rhythm and according to their circumstances; open because there is freedom for everyone to advance as much as they wish, and to renew, redirect or amend the learning process as they see fit.

Openness in education must face another great challenge posed by the industrialized world. This is the need for individuals to be trained to perform specific trades or professions and yet be able to contribute to changes required by the dynamics of economic processes and by technological advances. For these transform and modify the social fabric in which professions are practiced.

Excessive professionalization as education's only objective is to be changed by knowledge which, without underestimating needed specialization, should keep the door open for redefining roles and functions. After all, this is one of the main features of the contemporary world. The conventional closed concept of professionalization has to open toward a more flexible social positioning which offers more opportunities. This calls for adoption of policies of social recycling that will allow the members of society to avoid stagnation and inadequacy as result of closed conceptions of professionalization.

Quality vs. Quantity?

Some think that openness in education goes against quality. It is true that quality underlies the effort to excel and that they both reinforce each other. It would be a grave mistake to sacrifice quality in education for the sake of openness. At first sight they seem to exclude each other and choosing one over the other becomes a dilemma at decision time. This would be true, however, only if quality is defined as the system's capacity to be exclusive; that is, if we begin by thinking **a priori** that only those considered **excellent** are eligible to reach educational goals thus turning academic life into a hurdle race to prevent people from completing their studies.

Quality should be equated with the educational system's capacity to educate, train and fulfill individuals. It means putting at the latter's disposal controlled and clearly defined means of training to improve themselves. In this way they can contribute to the progress of the family and society as useful, active and beneficial citizens within the context of their own capabilities and needs.

This also means organizing educational processes so that the pupil becomes the subject of education, a subject that participates actively in the same process by excelling and tapping his or her full potential. It also means designing materials and methods to uphold learning, keep students within the system and motivate them into treating education as a daily happening. In this context, every situation should be treated as an educational opportunity. After these definitions it is easy to understand why, without quality, any type of education is not only inadequate but also unacceptable.

Quality, therefore, implies having clear objectives and implementing processes and methods compatible with them. It also means self-evaluation of learning to allow students to assess their performance. It means allowing individuals to progress at their own pace. This is conducive to finding multiple solutions both for the individual and society. It also encourages those who have dropped out of school to rejoin the system. It motivates and maintains active the subject who learns and acquires education. In this way the education system serves society and its members not as an isolated, self-supplying body whose sole reason for being is itself.

These arguments show that quality Vs. openness is a false dilemma and why the fallacy of excellence is promoted by pretending that the only excellent students are those **able to put**

up with the system, instead of the system being able to **develop human potential** and thus meet the objectives for which it was created.

Quality understood this way requires redefining the roles of those who play on the stage of education. This is especially true of teachers who, according to established pedagogic tradition, see their educational role only as teaching and communicating specific subjects, something which soon becomes a chore only partially retributed by meager salaries. For their part, authorities in charge of the system must redefine objectives so as to produce real changes in their conventional policing and supervisory roles, exercised only in enforcing rules. Instead, they should adopt innovative measures to restructure the entire educational framework. On the whole society must acquire a new vision of education, recognizing and accepting its high priority and securing outside the system not only much-needed reforms and changes, but also resources and means to implement them.

The criterion of quality, therefore, has a double face. Internally, processes and methods must be refined to convert education into creative and self-fulfilling action. Externally, the objectives of education must be defined so as to gain a new dimension, that of creating conditions for a more egalitarian and dynamic society, fully responsible for itself and possessing will to excel and penchant for success.

Social Relevancy

Relevancy relates to adequate contents and methods in the educational system according to the prevailing circumstances and specific needs of the population that is being educated, on individual, social and cultural levels.

Relevancy must also take into account the model of society being built, which must be seen with the proper perspective. Considering both present and future lends itself to contradictions. For example, in the case of peasant children it is difficult to define which contents can help them develop realistic attitudes, vision of the future and capacity to overcome restrictive environmental structures.

A complex case of social relevancy refers to the kind of education most useful for the growing number of people involved in the so-called informal economy, which is typical of urban megalopolises in the Third World, and particularly in Latin America. How should educational curriculums be oriented to help new generations overcome such limiting economic and social structures and yet avoid wasting their inherent possibilities?

On the formal school side, policies on the curriculum are based on requirements of general and generalizing education, made up of a series of notions, contents and subjects considered relevant within the aggregate knowledge that the human mind should manage. Such knowledge is broken down into natural sciences, social sciences, grammar, mathematics, physical education, languages, religious and moral teaching, and esthetics. For each subject, certain knowledge is required at every level of education, separately from the students' social, economic, cultural and physical environment. Thus knowledge becomes homologous for all citizens in a given country due to the premise that it is unfair for some to master certain knowledge while others receive a different education. This would mean to place limits on opportunities for certain sectors of the population.

These arguments are somewhat valid. But first it is essential to define what parts of the curriculum should be universally and generally adopted for all citizens and what areas should be specifically implemented as appropriate for prevailing economic, labor and cultural conditions and needs. This is the way to solve the dilemma caused by the question of relevancy.

Relevancy will help define a **social curriculum** made up by subjects which normally concern the nation's citizens. Such problems as the foreign debt, guerrilla action, structure and constitution of political parties, inflation and weakening of currency, exploitation and conservation of natural resources, prices of oil and petroleum products, scope and make-up of exports, balance of payments, road conditions, variations in climate, shortages of food, population explosion, natural catastrophes, prevention of accidents, struggle among pressure groups, labor unions and similar organizations, estrangement between governments and civil societies, national defense requirements, sports celebrities and their triumphs and failures, rising prices and higher costs of living... these and many others are subjects which make up a country's so-called **social curriculum.** They should be reason for concern by educational authorities in charge of planning.

In one way or another, these subjects affect the life of citizens as well as their work, social and economic activities and, within a really democratic framework, should be the subject of discussion, opinion, study, research and even, decision making. Many of them are part of the formal educational curricula, yet the method in which they are taught within the school system does not always assure understanding. For this reason, systems and procedures have to be established in order to update them permanently and correctly on national-wide scale.

If the contents of curricula both in formal schooling and informal education have - or should have - paramount importance to the problems and needs currently faced by society, their importance is probably much greater for future societies. For in its perspective dimension, the curriculum should not only be concerned with the image or model of society being formed by spontaneous historical forces, but also shape the new society in the offing. In this sense, social prospectus is a dynamic, innovating force which attempts to induce - as far as this is possible and permissible - changes in current conditions, in the hope and true wish that the world can become better and more humane.

CHAPTER XV

Achieving Human Potential

Strategies

It is evident that the demand for education exceeds the present system's capacity. It is also true that economic progress and technological advancement require the work force to be trained and updated. Besides, those who have dropped out of the system need attention, professionals have to update what they know, and a great many adults with little or no schooling should be given opportunities for vocational training.

In view of the current economic plight of Latin American countries and the volume of such demand, it is utopian to believe the traditional education system can take care of the need. It is urgent to find other options to reach larger amounts of people quickly, efficiently and economically. In this context, both informal education systems and mass communications media could play important roles.

Through **innovation and educational technology**, it is possible to reach various sectors of the population inexpensively, timely, flexibly and appropriately. And have major impact in training those who hold the keys to the future of these countries.

Several strategies may be suggested for implementing a **program to develop human potential.**

The first calls for **national mobilization.** Developing human potential is such a colossal task that it becomes everybody's job.

Its scope normally exceeds the government's economic, creative and organizational capabilities, already diminished through constant fiscal crises. Therefore, all efforts and resources, coupled with the will to succeed, must be applied to reach common goals in education. Only through active participation by the entire community in a spirit of solidarity is there any assurance of arriving at proposed objectives.

Everyone from every segment comprising the nation must join this great common enterprise, be it as individuals, groups or institutions. This effort goes beyond the educational sector; teachers are not the only ones who may impart learning. Anyone who has knowledge can share it with others; they should be trained quickly and adequately to do so. This way, total participation by the community is secured. The joint program becomes everyone's task.

A second strategy is both follow-up and complement of the first. This is the **orchestration of efforts** with contributions by three sectors: the state, private enterprise, and the community, all in a spirit of solidarity and through inter-institutional participation, coordination and cooperation.

Such orchestration respects each sector's identity and peculiar characteristics, yet demands that each should modernize its framework and adapt it to meet the program's actions and objectives. Therefore, specific roles and functions are assigned to the state, the private sector and the community.

The state plays the role of **promoter** and assumes direction of the plan at the highest level. It **works to get others to work** by promoting and supporting different state agencies, as well as the private sector and the community, in order to share responsibilities and carry out the plan.

Based on the concept that educational action can be implemented outside the established terms of reference of the school environment, the government may perform the role of **educator** through its ministries, institutes and agencies. For example, when implementing medical assistance services, the ministries in charge of public health can carry out educational campaigns in preventive medicine, nutrition and hygiene. The same applies to ministries of labor, agriculture, development, industry and justice, as well as to all state agencies at the national, regional and local levels.

The private sector can act as catalyst to **multiply** the effects of the plan by supporting it with resources and infrastructure. This way each corporation may extend the benefits of education beyond its own work force to the general population in its particular area of influence. It can push, arrange, adopt and implement cultural, educational and health projects sharing the common aim of society's integral development. The participation of private enterprise in social projects has increased substantially in the last few years.

The community **participates and executes**. Local groups and communities must take part in determining needs, making decisions, and undertaking study plans. They also have responsibility for implementation and assessment of results.

A third strategy is called **sectorization.** In reference to educational demands from various sectors of the population, the program should favor processes and actions which cover each community's needs and specific conditions. Thus specific measures may be carried out for clearly defined population segments; for example, mothers, children, rural communities, workers and employees, and professional groups.

The fourth strategy may be expressed with several words: **flexibility, economy, and full utilization of existing resources.** Flexibility as to educational media and methods used in different programs and duration of learning and training processes. Such experiences must be adapted to the needs of the users.

Flexibility and openness should also apply to choice of schedules and places of learning. The school must go to the pupil if the pupil cannot go to the school. Study and dissemination of information may take place anywhere: at work, in community centers, churches, or hospitals.

Because these programs cover vast areas of the population and are implemented on a national scale, their operational costs per participant tend to be low.

Community Participation

The four aforementioned strategies (national mobilization, institutional cooperation, sectorization and flexibility and economy) have a common starting point: involving the communities in action. In democratic countries the community is the foundation of the activities of the state. At the same time the private sector acts by serving and benefiting the national community. The latter organizes itself in different ways and formats to act and cooperate actively in favor of social benefits, which are the inevitable product of the struggle for the common good.

Therefore the community sector represented in services, foundations, and social communications media must be part of the grand priority, which is to develop human potential.

It is particularly important to involve all kinds of leaders in this task, among them politicians, business men, owners of mass communications media, university presidents and professors, clergymen and religious leaders, sports figures, as well as the leadership and membership of labor unions, cooperatives, trade and professional associations and federations. Equally important is participation by artists, who enjoy special credibility among the public. It's a mistake to assume that only the government is able to manage education. It is true that in this field the state has the largest resources, as well as constitutional responsibility and authority. But governments cannot cover every front and do everything.

Groups from the community sector can become organized by forming associations, foundations and other enterprises to carry out this effort. If such organizational approach is supported by entrepreneurs, impact is much greater and success is assured. The private sector is called to **sponsor** and promote such activities. Thus costs are reduced and action is more productive from the very beginning.

Operational Instruments

Two operational instruments are required to implement this plan efficiently. The first is **educational communication** as it refers basically to use of mass communications media and educational technology, as well as to the establishment of multi-media systems to disseminate teaching messages to all segments, groups and regions.

The second is **training for education agents.** This is indeed wide in scope because it covers from high level training of instructors in post-graduate and even post-doctorate courses to instruction to community leaders within their own groups. To implement this machinery, courses have to be designed, studies carried out on supply and installed capacity, and scholarship programs drawn up.

Mass Media and Educational Communication

Mass communications media influence individuals on how they see and interpret the world and everything that happens therein; furthermore, they mould feelings and the way events are regarded and enjoyed. Communications media shape the conscience of human conglomerates, and exert deep influence on patterns of mental behavior and other components of social awareness. Therefore they have ideological meaning and lasting importance.

The educational process must use the huge potential of mass communications media. Their variety is infinite and each has its own features and fulfills different functions according to whatever teaching method is used. They do not have inherent advantages or disadvantages; their effectiveness hinges on being used for specific purposes.

In the development of human potential, mass media are used as promotion agents. They can also be a vehicle to disseminate educational content within the context of what is now known as non-formal teaching outside the school and deals with complex training programs at different levels.

Besides media already traditional in today's world like radio, newspapers, motion pictures and television, newer vehicles should also be used in teaching, such as Videotex, interactive video, massive data banks and computers. All these are revolutionizing education techniques at the end of the 20th century.

To these vehicles we should add a series of social institutions dealing with non-formal education. Let's ponder for a minute on the role played in education and information dissemination by public libraries; specialized research facilities; cultural institutions and centers at the municipal level; dance, theatre and folklore groups; all kinds of resurgent musical ensembles; puppet shows and popular stage plays; musical bands, and in general, everything that places culture, science and technology within reach of the masses.

Such cultural explosion must be considered when thinking about educational policies. The school, of course, continues to play an essential part in educating the population, but it is not the only system and its influence is shared with other social sectors. Therefore, to reduce education to the school environment for purely pedagogic reasons is to ignore the dynamic nature of society.

Media are performing non-formal educational tasks when they motivate the masses toward specific social goals or create new guidelines for behavior. For instance, a public service radio announcement calling on mothers to vaccinate their children; a TV minidrama about the tragedy of a peasant woman lost in the city because she can't read or write; a well-designed outdoor sign about ways to fight off sickness; a flyer about skin care; a meeting of residents to protect their neighborhood from crime; and the constant press coverage about the disastrous effects of drug addiction. All of these are permanent models of how the media can help to shape new attitudes and reinforce or change existing values.

Media have also implemented training methods in sequential and organized manner through systems that cover administrative matters dealing with enrollment, supervision, evaluation and control of students, and concession of certificates, diplomas and titles.

However complex, these systems have contributed substantially to the opening of closed, lineal or even professionally-inclined school systems. Such is the trend of education in this age of computers in which priorities and intentions revolve around the student as the major subject of teaching. Thus vocational training and opportunities to learn sciences, as well as new ways of thinking, become the main targets of education, turning obsolete the pedagogic transmission of fixed and static content.

Many people fear that use of the media might have negative effects on what has been called massification of education. Undoubtedly one of the most positive factors about the media is their capacity to reach large groups of people wherever they may live and work.

But let's not confuse massive coverage with massification of education. The latter occurs when students are deprived of proper attention from the school system; when they are left alone; when they are not given individual care; when they are not assessed or taught how to assess themselves; when they have no chance to interact with other students or communicate with their teachers; when their questions are not answered; when they are treated like numbers instead of persons.

Such risks of massification also occur in education through the media as often as in conventional teaching. Within the context of teaching by the media, all of these problems may be avoided through adequate support by tutors and training instructors, proper educational aids, methods of interaction by correspondence or telephone, design and adoption of systems of assessment and self-assessment, study groups for student interaction, and service centers where students may exchange ideas with tutors, effect consultations and receive practical training on study subjects. The most important thing about teaching through the media is that it is based on openness and accessibility, the foundation of true democratic education.

Training of Educational Agents

The second operative mechanism to reach our objectives involves training of educational agents. The latter include a whole gamut of volunteers and paid personnel, among them groups and institutions that act promote, lead, direct, facilitate and implement the plan.

The first level that requires training is made up of **community leaders.** This calls for various methods, from workshops, seminars and short meetings within the community to more complex action, such as permanent educational systems with longer, structured courses for leaders to acquire knowledge and know-how to motivate and organize community groups.

The second training level involves **educators and teachers.** Here again, methods to be used are multiple and varied. It is essential, however, that they become proficient in educational communications and community organization.

To manage and implement all these plans, **administrators** are needed. They should also be properly trained to design and control projects and to implement them through team work, rational and economic utilization of available resources, and supervision of the staff assigned to each action or task.

Also required is professional and specialized training of **high level personnel.** This should not only include executives, directors and planners, but also scientists and intellectuals. This is why it is important to involve universities and research centers.

The development and training of aforementioned groups usually calls for a broad program of scholarships to place study opportunities at the disposal of the program's agents.

Contents and Programs

Contents and programs should be adjusted to specific conditions within any given country, region or place. The following typical priorities may be considered common, but they should not be interpreted as the only ones possible.

Specific programs for families, women and children

A plan of this nature must include specific programs for families, women and children. Education is one of the pillars that assures the development of every society and the family plays a fundamental role in this process. It is there that behavior is set, values and attitudes are consolidated, and interests and aptitudes are developed and nurtured. Students are initially exposed to economic notions that will influence their offspring and whole future generations. The family is also the center of cultural and moral values, beliefs and customs. It is also where seeds are planted for participation in community life, the heart and soul of any true democracy.

Furthermore, while women have been gradually improving their status in the life of the nation, at lower social and economic levels they still lag behind in education and economic power. Nonetheless, women play a most important role in transmitting cultural and national values, and as a group, have great potential for participation at the highest levels of economic production. Programs must be designed for women to increase knowledge, develop specific skills and use education as an effective tool to improve themselves and their children. All this will enhance their position as active subjects within society, guarantee their right to participate in the nation's economic life, and consolidate their position as mothers and prime movers of the family.

During the first years of life within the family, every human being develops his or her brain and other basic structures. This is why it's so important to promote programs for mothers and infants through action covering psychological, social, educational, nutritional and health factors which are essential in shaping children.

Programs in productivity and labor

Labor is the foundation upon which society, civilization, science, and art are built; in other words, the base of general culture. It is a process of inter-action between humankind and nature through which the former is educated and its needs fulfilled. It also means inter-action with other people, who may adopt different forms of life according to the times and to specific societies. At the same time education allows human beings to acquire knowledge and skills to adequately perform different trades and professions within the social fabric.

Hence the importance of linking education and work so individuals can fulfill themselves as an expression of personal affirmation. We should emphasize the influence exerted by labor in developing human potential as a source of experiences that contribute to physical, intellectual, emotional, artistic and ideological progress.

Education and labor are essential factors in a country's social and economic growth. And this progress is furthered by men and women with a capacity to deal with the world in an instrumental way, encouraged by technical interest, but also by their innate capability to think and reflect about themselves and their works. Duly articulated, education and work stimulate active participation and transform individuals into subjects of change.

Productive occupation is each individual's source of personal welfare and it assures social stability in general. The productivity of labor endows each economic system with relative independence. This is why any program to develop human potential must include training activities for jobs and productivity. These, in turn, will expand vocational training opportunities for adults who require skills, wish to correct deficiencies or need the chance to re-train and recycle themselves professionally.

A country's potential is made up of its natural resources, available infrastructure and capital, but these must be used rationally and adequately by the population, which acts as multiplier effect.

Every economy basically depends upon natural resources and capital which may be represented by infrastructure and financial support. Yet these two elements alone are not production factors. Capital tends to dilute if it's not turned over by labor into a permanent process of reproduction and accumulation. This compensates in part the losses from depletion of resources, population growth and greater demand, and currency devaluation. When labor is added to the former two factors, it is the only force that can increase capital - provided it compensates the aforementioned losses and adds savings to the overall process.

If it does not meet these conditions, the results are negative; that is, society will squander both natural wealth and capital. In other words, work as multiplier of wealth is positive when it increases capitalization rates **per capita** in any given society. On the other hand, if it cannot increase said rates, the multiplier effect will be negative and wealth will diminish.

Vocational training for the work force poses two complementary facets. First, training of people already involved in the productive process who cannot give up their jobs. This group includes absolute and functional illiterates and those with minimum schooling at elementary grades. But it also covers laborers, technicians, technologists, university graduates and post-graduates who have to update their knowledge and skills in order to keep up with technological advance.

This first group includes as well those who wish to change profession or validate knowledge acquired empirically. School drop-outs must also be considered and qualified.

The second facet refers to vocational training for school-age population. This should take two questions into account: the overwhelming deficiencies in coverage which cannot be overcome by simply adding to school capacity, and the quality of education in relation to each country's requirements for production and development. Workers must be trained for different levels within the country's present and future industrial framework because instruction received today will be applied tomorrow. Otherwise we shall be training obsolete technicians and professionals. Equally important is to promote at all times in-the-job efficiency and productivity.

Teaching civic and community values

Solid and ample citizenship values among the population are another fundamental factor of social progress. Yet teaching relevant subjects is generally restricted to the first years of elementary school, when many of those values cannot be appreciated. Therefore, permanent programs oriented to different segments of the population must be established in civic and communal participation, and in conservation of natural resources and the environment, as well as special courses for adult illiterates in order to teach them to read and write and receive basic instruction.

The educational problems just described apply to the Latin American population as a whole. Suggested solutions are directed both to traditional schooling and to organizations and programs which now perform partial and complementary functions outside that system on specific phases of education normally restricted to certain segments of the population in a social or geographic sense.

Values, social disciplines, public opinion and healthy nationalism must be mobilized so as to involve the people in the country's development in a real, dynamic and responsible way. Constructive national pride and a climate conducive to the free exercise of citizenship should promote in everyone the will to participate and share the responsibilities that come from living in a democracy.

We must reiterate those values pertaining to social co-existence and behavior in minor and yet unavoidable chores like forming and respecting queues, or in more hazardous tasks like driving in heavy traffic or over dangerous roads. In this educational context, emphasis must be made on the proper use of public utilities and community services.

Ecological Programs to Protect the Environment and Recover Renewable Natural Resources

These are indeed important programs in view of the alarming destruction of the environment and natural resources in Latin America due to overpopulation in certain areas and inadequate exploitation of resources for the sake of immediate economic survival. Outlined below are some of the most serious problems along these lines which could be alleviated through educational action:

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- Erosion caused by inadequate methods of toiling the land and lack of proper agriculture methods, as well as by climatic and environmental factors, a situation which is endangering the world's vegetal wealth.

- Parallel to this problem is indiscriminate destruction of jungles, forests and timber reserves, practiced by many, from powerful multi-national lumber corporations to native tribes and peasants who use wood for cooking.

- Water pollution from the use of certain chemicals in agriculture or industrial wastes that poison rivers. This is compounded in large metropolitan areas by the disposal of sewage. As a result of this state of things, aquatic wildlife has diminished substantially. Erosion has increased the volume of soil being washed into the sea and also floods vast areas formerly used for agriculture and cattle breeding. Many riverways have been reduced to the point they can no longer be used for communication and this has had negative economic consequences.

- Environmental pollution in the cities, with its clouds of gases and the physical damage inflicted on human life and property as a result of more and more vehicles fueled by gasoline, industrial wastes issuing from factory smokestacks, scarcity of vegetation to purify the air, noxious smells and scarcity of means to treat and solve these ills.

- Deterioration of the landscape due to lack of effective provisions on human settlements, protection of aesthetic values and rational utilization of urban areas.

- Growing problems caused by garbage and waste disposal, particularly in large cities, which not only deface the environment but also engender unsanitary conditions, and besides destroy vast areas now used for disposal.

Implicit in all these experiences are certain values and attitudes which are part of education for citizenship. In fact, they become prime movers in information re-dissemination campaigns, motivations and actions. For little is gained by adopting provisions, creating agencies or improving their effectiveness, and approving ever-growing budgets if there is no parallel civic education campaigns to teach the social relevancy of such problems and make the community feel directly and responsibly involved.

Programs in Public Health, Hygiene, Nutrition and Prevention of Disease

This is also a most complex field in which all agents, institutions and active sectors of the community must play roles. There is need to encourage **preventive attitudes** in regard to disease both as they mould personal and family habits as well as develop social and individual conditions for better standards of health.

Examples are many. Campaigns in favor of vaccination, nutrition, and personal and environmental hygiene; campaigns against drug addiction, tobacco and alcoholism; campaigns to promote sports and recreation; campaign for each age group, from children to the third age; information campaigns about epidemics and communicable diseases such as AIDS. All these make up a complex fabric of contents and motivations which are strongly needed to defend values and promote human potential.

To carry out the proposed plan, a series of support mechanisms must be created first in order to give it consistency and assure its effective operation. Besides promoting and disseminating the plan, these mechanisms should cover research and evaluation as well as communications networks and data exchange.

Concepts and ideas suggested as components of a plan to develop human potential should serve as guidelines to create and adapt new actions according to each country's and each region's particular needs.

CHAPTER XVI

A Political Priority

Decision and Commitment

The plan to **develop human potential** has been thus far presented as the great objective of social advancement in Latin America. This is the desired goal to prepare it to face the 21st century as a new continent filled with hope, where the great masses shall at last participate. This will be the means to discover its enormous physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual potential of its peoples and nations. Thus all kinds of reserves will be unleashed. Latin America may at last fulfill its true historic destiny.

This will come to pass if the plan is more than a just a proposition and becomes a political priority through efficient and effective decision and commitment on the part of leaders, power groups and especially, the people themselves. It is urgent to reach **agreement** to put suggested dispositions and action into practice.

The term **political priority** is used to identify the need to make such determination explicit. Society in general, within its leading circles should define objectives, priorities and methods, assign resources to this grand social project and monitor its effective implementation. To make it explicit means it should be treated as a national and continental purpose. And, to grant it priority connotes that economic and social advancement can only be based on developing the human potential. By defining targets it is acknowledged that, while urgent in character, the plan can only be accomplished progressively.

To determine various methods is to accept that there are many paths to reach proposed goals. To provide adequate tools and framework is to think about changes, reforms and adjustments needed in the educational system. To determine policies for action means creating the philosophical foundation to support these programs. These questions and many others already exposed and discussed in depth make up those explicitly operational elements known as policies.

By ear-marking development of human potential a political priority, it is understood that all of society's efforts must be directed to this goal. It is true, of course, that governments must cover many fronts due to the problems of today's world, each day more complex. Therefore, action cannot be suspended in such fields as public health, housing, national defense, industrialization, communications, highways, agricultural and cattle production, research, public utilities and human settlements, conservation and rational use of natural resources, technical instruction and training, international relations, development of community organizations, cooperatives, commodity marketing, creation of new energy sources and so on. These are but a few of the multiple tasks that a country must face on a daily basis. But overriding attention to human potential in all and each of these tasks is essential to carry them out adequately.

Some cities like Mexico and Caracas have led the way in focusing priorities. For instance, they introduced subway systems as a solution to urban mass communication and transportation problems, supported by campaigns of civic motivation and education for citizenship which have produced excellent results and social benefits. It was possible there, to implant a culture of pride as healthy means of social control.

This is the true meaning of **turning a country into one big school.** It is not only essential to strengthen the school system, and prepare and train high-level leaders and the population in general,but also to take advantage of all the state's activities to instill in the people civic and community values. An educational content should be included when providing whatever public work and service such as health, transportation and recreational facilities, to attain desired goals, and influence human growth and fulfillment to assure that such works are enjoyed and maintained. Thus the policy of **development of the human potential** will become reality.

Recovering Values

The issue of conventional school education has given rise to much debate. The structuring of schools, colleges and universities is in itself a product of serious and respectable historic factors which cannot be ignored. The relation between teacher and pupil goes back to the very dawn of Western culture and is deeply embedded in tradition. Teachers guide and lead pupils through knowledge, open new horizons and motivate charges to widen their own horizons of learning. Teachers are, therefore, a dynamic factor in development; yet not only as conveyers of scientific and technological knowledge, but because they are also responsible for society's entire progress through instruction on ethical, spiritual, cultural and moral values.

The classroom also plays a role over and above the teaching-learning process of technical and scientific disciplines. Actually it becomes a socializing factor which creates attitudes and individual and group patterns of behavior and team-work. The classroom is in itself a vehicle of educational technology equipped in modern schools with all kinds of aids and instruments to make learning easier and more efficient. The school is not only teachers and classrooms. It is a whole physical set-up with sports fields, recreational yards, laboratories, experimental farms, and other facilities. It is also a self-contained organic and administrative structure that reflects the model of the new society and can even influence how the latter evolves. The school environment is or should be imbued with a sense of discipline and work, democratic values, constructive research, mutual respect, and appreciation of artistic and folkloric values. If the family is the cell of society, the school can become the basic fabric of society itself.

To implement the policy of developing human potential, high priority should be assigned to the recovery of the school system's fundamental values, especially because younger segments of the population spend quite a few years in this environment. This period is becoming longer every day due to scientific and technological advance, as well as to social causes. Equally true is that in the teaching/learning and socialization processes, parallel factors do occur which increase educational and training opportunities outside the school.

Teachers and the New Technology

As mass information media are utilized in the teaching-learning process, teachers are called to assume new roles. Some fear teachers might disappear altogether, but this will never happen. The traditional image of the teacher will probably change, as has happened with many other professionals without eliminating their careers. In our age of computers, teachers are no longer sole conveyers of knowledge and wisdom; they become guides, motivators, advisers, catalysts. While they have always performed these functions, formerly they were optional in the classroom. It is also evident that education through the media is not feasible without teachers, professors and scientists.

Teachers must not only teach pupils directly in the classroom, but also learn educational techniques in order to design, refine and try out aids and self-assessment systems, as well as monitoring methods for individual instruction; manage academic evaluation systems in a massive and comprehensive way; build up data and question banks; create computerized teaching aids; use computers both in teaching and administration; achieve better utilization of school time and space; design, try out and evaluate new educational curricula based on individualized and sectorized teaching methods germane to the students' socio-economic environment; and be ready to experiment with many other innovations which call for professional action in education.

All these functions must be considered when the time comes to redesign educational policies toward the development of human potential. This requires new approaches to processes which deal with teachers regarding their professional selection, education, training and updating. This is an essential prerequisite for the new system to operate and it calls for profound changes and complex decisions.

Reforming Ministries of Education

There is no doubt that the goal of tapping full human potential can be accomplished only through the political decision of reforming the structure and policies of ministries of education. This is indeed complex because their functions have always revolved around the administration of teachers; that is, labor relations with the state, chronically concerned with social needs and constrained by budgetary limitations, on the one hand, and on the other, group of teachers, often highly organized and even well-versed in leftist ideology . The latter, through continuous and well-orchestrated pressure on the state and society in general, have managed to turn pedagogic praxis into a mere labor question, thus losing the highly respectable status traditionally accorded to the teaching profession.

It must be acknowledged, however, that teachers dependent upon ministries of education have not always been treated with fairness and respect in the way of salaries and due appreciation for their educational mission and the social benefits it entails. But we cannot hide the other side of the coin: teachers are lax about updating their skills and have little regard for technological advance. This accounts for deficient productivity and low quality of teaching in schools.

Taking these factors into account, it is easy to see why governments are reluctant to invest more in education even if they have the capacity to do so. Everyone agrees on the need to educate the people, but many doubt the wisdom of supporting the negative cost-benefit ratios which prevail in some educational institutions.

Obviously, these problems do exist and they are not going to go away. They must be given special attention within the healthy and functional reform of ministries of education with emphasis on challenges placed by the expansion of the educational system in context and methodology. Thus ministries must stop paying so much attention only to the formal school sector, but also explore more innovative ways to reach educational objectives; making inroads in a basically decisive manner for the development of human potential in all its dimensions.

It's not just a manner of bringing about structural reforms at the ministry level, which tend to be mostly cosmetic, ending in a power struggle; the real requirements are innovative educational ways and openings. Education must be a standing national priority, exempted from the ups and downs of politics brought about by changes of governments and leaders. It must have a clear and permanent mandate as to goals that can be accomplished continuously and competently by highly professional and socially respected cadres of educative administrators.

A major research subject on education in Latin America should be the analysis in social costs caused by the administrative praxis of permanently changing ministers of education and their top aides. In some countries these posts are filled by political appointees whose average period in office is less than one year. Such changes jeopardize pedagogical goals, objectives, processes and priorities.

Governments' gravest mistake has been to measure the performance of ministers of education only with political and partisan yardsticks. Thus they become cabinet members subject to the vicissitudes and strategies of a political world in turmoil. Education requires time and constancy; its fruits are harvested only after many and permanent efforts. Most infrastructure can be planned and built on short and medium terms, but not the people's education, which has always required and will continue to require long-term approach.

The ministry of education is the constitutional and legal instrument for the education of the people of the nation, as well as channel of public funds for this purpose. It is the country's greatest enterprise and must be treated as such. Its manager must be an extraordinarily competent executive able to recruit a working group to run things and implement lofty objectives.

Because these are indeed ambitious, said executive group has to motivate the community at the national level to join the common effort as a matter of individual and collective pride. It must also find new and more adequate methods to multiply resources and increase productivity in education. Such a group must know how to delegate responsibilities and leave implementation of specific tasks and functions in the hands of the community and its organizations.

A Challenge to Formal Education

So far we have seen that, from the point of view of administration, the limitations and faults faced by the educational sector as it endeavors to reach fuller development of human potential are overwhelming. This is highly paradoxical and contradictory because the administrative sector of education as run by the state, should rationally take steps in proposing new initiatives in this area. Reality, however, points to a school system so cumbersome and inefficient that some so-called **traditional educators** simply cannot think in broader and more meaningful terms.

These statements may appear too hard-headed or critical, yet they are shared by many educators who have taken action to correct the situation. To be objective, we must point to efforts made in many countries to give back to the school - that is, to the school system in general - its former leadership role in shaping new generations and creating a better future for these countries.

In this context emphasis should be placed on substantial efforts to increase coverage and quality in the school system through programs like the Unitary School and the New School which are changing educational praxis in many countries of the region. Steps have also been taken in favor of the professionalization of primary school teachers. Much still has to be done, but the importance of these provisions cannot be overlooked as contributions to the creation of a new society.

Pedagogic practice must be reviewed at the middle school level in order to solve many problems faced by youthful generations fraught with expectations and growing frustrations. In-depth soul-searching at the continental level is needed in this area, to take advantage of the positive aspects of videos, pop and rock music, fashion, sports, personal achievement, travel and tourism, love of nature and so on. All of these could be used in teaching young people.

It is also important to increase trends in favor of more technical training to fully tap the strength and creativity of the young for productive tasks. A frontal assault must be launched against entrenched academicism. For its inherited nature deprives technical degrees of value and importance. If Latin America wishes to advance, it must not be afraid to face social status problems created by its obsession with academic titles, and subsequently open new frontiers to vocational and professional training for the millions of young people who join the job market every year.

Latin America cannot enter into the 21st century without serious policies for the advancement of science and technology. This doesn't mean repeating the same research work that led the big powers to technological supremacy. But if we look at the age-old wisdom of Asian peoples like the Japanese, the Chinese and those who live in Southeast Asia, who have known how to cut down technological barriers, we may find other paths to self-progress through pragmatic use of advances made by industrialized countries.

These and many others figure among the challenges faced by the formal education sector. The way it responds will deeply affect the continent's spiritual, mental and physical health. Unchecked proliferation of conflicts, volcanic explosion of expectations, and strengthening of hope depend in the future on the vision and will of those who lead and rule. Only their action can provide Latin America for a way out compatible with its enormous material wealth and its huge spiritual and human potential.

There is hope. The job can be accomplished. Let's get on with it.

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EPILOGUE

The People's Power. What People? What Power?

In his treatise on "The Republic", Plato defines the essence of democracy as **the people's power.** From the Greek agora, past the Roman forum and the city governments of the Renaissance, to the Constitution of the United States, the French revolution, the wars of independence in Latin American countries, and even Russia's Proletarian Revolution early in this century, democracy has always been present as an ideal. This has been the goal, at least in theory, of all political changes and revolutionary upheavals.

It would seem, however, as if democracy were a **moving target,** something accomplished at one historic moment only to withdraw more every day, so it must be set up again for the sake of permanency. Countries in Latin America established their republics early in the 19th century, and from that moment on - considered as the birth of the region's democratic systems -, the ideal forged by great visionaries like Francisco Miranda, Simon Bolivar, Jose de San Martin, Jose Artigas, Miguel Hidalgo and Jose Maria Morelos has become increasingly vague. Sometimes it has even been used to aggravate conflict and unleash fratricidal wars in which the people always lose.

It is valid, therefore, to ask where is the people's power. Perhaps in the fact that in most countries government leaders are elected within the constitution? Is this real and effective exercise in democracy? Shouldn't it also imply permanent and active participation by the people, and not only as having access to goods and services produced by society, but mainly in their capacity to make decisions on subjects, matters and choices that affect them directly?

The democratic ideal is deeply rooted in the feelings, beliefs and thoughts of the peoples of the continent. They share a profound vocation for freedom and vast capabilities to live and exercise democracy, and while this vocation manifests itself at all times, it is particularly relevant when crisis and conflict arise. A striking example is how the population does not hesitate to go out to vote, even when it means putting their lives in danger for the sake of expressing decision and freedom.

The people of Latin America build democracy on a day to day basis. By going to their jobs despite threats by extremists, deficient transportation systems, poor public and community utilities and other conditions of duress. By children and adults attending school. By what housewives, office clerks, farmers, laborers, businessmen, civil servants, bankers, shopkeepers, drivers, elevator operators, barbers, sportsmen and countless others do every day. Citizens enjoy liberty, performing their daily tasks with a large measure of hope in spite of poverty and privations, overcoming the daily torture of news about killings, violence, crime, embezzlement, rape, graft and corruption, accidents, famine and other calamities which the information media propagate with such relish.

People like the Latin Americans deserve to hold real power some day; that is, to exercise democracy in its fullest sense. All that is needed is for the people to learn to involve themselves with a commitment to participation; to be given more opportunities to extend their education; to be aware, thus to express considered opinions on events, laws, policies and facts affecting their daily life. People who can act in the social and economic sense as resourceful subjects towards their own improvement.

The leaders of Latin America face a formidable responsibility if they should close the roads available to their people through democratic participation, and thus extinguish the flame of hope for a freer and more dignified and humane life.

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The real road to **democracy** lies in recognizing that **there are underdeveloped countries because their peoples are underdeveloped;** and to act accordingly.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

Demographic Data and Economic and Social Indexes

The statistics which appear in the tables that follow are a summary of the main figures that were studied in order to arrive at this book's conclusions.

The form in which they appear make it possible to use them comparatively according to the following categories:

--By years, taking into account evolution from the decade of the 50's to the present; in some cases projected through the year 2000.

--By Latin American countries according to the availability of statistics which is variable in some cases, according to source of information.

--By position of Latin America as related to some industrialized countries with a market oriented economy.

Demographic information serves to support assertions on uncontrolled growth and its consequences, to which reference is made in chapters I, II, V, VII, VIII, IX and XI.

Economic indexes regarding GNP, exchange rates, changes in Consumer Price Index, Minimum Wages, Occupation and Employment significantly point out the progressive deterioration of some of these and the increase of poverty levels in Latin America, reinforced by our analysis on poverty, development, foreign debt, informal economy in chapters II, III, V, VI, IX and XII.

Social index data are an integral part of the entire text; those figures are especially relevant to education and health since they expand the contents of the four chapters that make up Part I, in chapters V, IX and XI of Part II and in the last four that make up Part III.

The authors consider that the presentation of these statistics is useful to those who wish to have manageable, concrete summary of data that defines the economic and social profile of the Latin American continent and its evolution during the last half century. Thus it is a contribution that not only supports the issues discussed, but presents a consistent group of statistics that may be used for future analysis.

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Table 1

Latin America: Demographic Indicators, 1950 - 2000

	1950	1960	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Population:									
Total (000)	164,810	216,754	283,407	321,194	361,373	404,806	451,072	498,565	546,395
Males (000)	82,801	108,686	141,942	160,784	180,799	202,433	225,476	249,110	272,884
Females (000)	82,009	108,068	141,466	160,410	180,574	202,373	225,596	249,455	273,511
Median age	19.7	18.9	18.6	19.1	19.8	20.8	21.7	22.7	23.8
Urban	67,544	106,731	162,570	197,307	236,119	279,110	324,857	372,000	419,432
Rural	97,266	110,024	120,837	123,887	125,253	125,696	126,216	126,565	126,963
Per cent urban	40.98	49.24	57.36	61.43	65.34	68.95	72.02	74.61	76.76
Density (persons/sq.km)	8	11	14	16	18	20	22	24	27
Economically active population:									
Total (000)	57,897	71,280	90,808	105,882	123,477	140,249	158,285	178,562	199,959
Males (000)	47,554	57,614	71,047	80,383	90,925	102,907	115,777	129,787	144,483
Females(000)	10,343	13,666	19,762	25,500	32,552	37,342	42,509	48,775	55,475
Per cent females	17.86	19.17	21.76	24.08	26.36	26.63	26.86	27.32	27.74

Source: United Nations. World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1950 - 2025, Nueva York, 1988.

(Continue)

Table 1

Latin America: Demographic Indicators, 1950 - 2000

(cont'd.)

	1950-1955	1960-1965	1970-1975	1980-1985	1985-1990	1990-1995	1995-2000
Vital Statistics:							
Crude birth rate (/1000)	42.5	41.0	35.4	31.6	29.7	27.5	25.4
Crude death rate (/1000)	15.4	12.2	9.7	8.2	7.6	7.1	6.8
Total fertility rate (per woman)	5.9	5.9	5.0	4.1	3.7	3.4	3.1
Life expectancy (years)	51.1	56.6	60.7	64.2	65.7	67.0	68.3
Infant mortality rate (/1000 births)	125	100	80	62	56	50	44
Annual rates of growth (%):							
Population:							
Total	2.77	2.82	2.53	2.30	2.19	2.02	1.85
Males	2.75	2.81	2.52	2.29	2.18	2.01	1.84
Females	2.78	2.84	2.55	2.31	2.20	2.03	1.86
Urban	4.73	4.49	3.95	3.40	3.08	2.75	2.43
Rural	1.31	1.09	0.50	0.07	0.08	0.06	0.06
Labor force:							
Total	2.11	2.39	3.12	2.58	2.45	2.44	2.29
Males	1.95	2.06	2.50	2.51	2.38	2.31	2.17
Females	2.80	3.71	5.23	2.78	2.63	2.79	2.61

Source: United Nations. World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1950 - 2025, New York, 1988.

Table 2

Total Population and Growth Rates, by Country, 1960 - 2000

Country	1960	1970	1980	1987	1990	1995	2000	1961-70	1971-80	1981-87	1990-95	1995-2000
	(Thousand of persons)							(Percentages)				
Argentina	20,616	23,962	28,237	31,137	32,880	35,073	37,197	1.5	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.2
Barbados	231	239	254	270	261	271	284	0.3	0.6	0.9	0.8	0.9
Bolivia	3,428	4,325	5,570	6,730	7,314	8,422	9,724	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.9
Brazil	72,594	95,847	121,286	141,452	150,368	165,083	179,487	2.8	2.4	2.2	1.9	1.7
Colombia	15,538	20,803	25,794	29,942	31,820	34,940	37,999	3.0	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.7
Costa Rica	1,236	1,731	2,284	2,791	2,937	3,271	3,596	3.4	2.8	2.9	2.2	1.9
Chile	7,614	9,504	11,145	12,536	12,987	13,922	14,792	2.2	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.2
Dominican Republic	3,231	4,423	5,697	6,716	6,971	7,704	8,407	3.2	2.6	2.4	2.0	1.8
Ecuador	4,413	6,051	8,123	9,923	10,782	12,314	13,939	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.5
El Salvador	2,570	3,588	4,525	4,934	6,484	7,531	8,708	3.4	2.3	1.2	3.0	3.0
Guatemala	3,964	5,246	6,917	8,434	9,197	10,621	12,222	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8
Guyana	569	709	865	988	1,040	1,119	1,196	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.5	1.4
Haití	3,675	4,500	5,413	6,147	7,509	8,596	9,860	2.0	1.9	1.8	2.7	2.8
Honduras	1,935	2,627	3,662	4,679	5,105	5,953	6,978	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.1	3.2
Jamaica	1,629	1,869	2,170	2,391	2,521	2,703	2,880	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3
Mexico	38,020	52,771	70,416	83,039	89,012	99,165	109,180	3.3	2.9	2.4	2.2	[illegible]
Nicaragua	1,493	2,053	2,771	3,501	3,871	4,539	5,261	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.2	3.0
Panama	1,105	1,487	1,956	2,274	2,418	2,659	2,893	3.0	2.8	2.2	1.9	1.7
Paraguay	1,773	2,351	3,147	3,922	4,231	4,807	5,405	2.9	3.0	3.2	2.6	2.4
Peru	9,931	13,193	17,295	20,727	22,332	25,123	27,952	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.2
Suriname	290	372	352	357	403	435	469	2.5	-0.6	0.2	1.5	1.5
Trinidad & Tobago	843	1,027	1,068	1,144	1,283	1,379	1,473	2.0	0.4	1.0	1.5	1.3
Uruguay	2,538	2,808	2,908	3,057	3,128	3,246	3,364	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.7
Venezuela	7,502	10,604	15,024	18,272	19,735	22,212	24,715	3.5	3.5	2.8	2.4	2.2

Source: Data 1960-1987: Interamerican Development Bank. Economic and Social Progress in Latin America, 1988 Report, Washington, 1988.
Data 1990-2000: United Nations. World Demographic Estimates and Projectios, 1950-2025, New York, 1988.

Table 3

Comparative Demographic and Fertility Indicators in Latin America and Selected Countries, 1960-1965, 1985-1990.

Country	Crude birth rate (/1000)		Crude death rate (/1000)		Total fertility rate (per woman)		Life expectancy (years)	
	60-65	85-90	60-65	85-90	60-65	85-90	60-65	85-90
Argentina	23.2	23.2	8.8	8.6	3.1	3.3	65.5	70.6
Barbados	29.1	18.5	9.2	8.6	4.2	2.0	65.9	73.5
Bolivia	46.1	42.8	21.5	14.1	6.6	6.1	43.4	53.1
Brazil	42.1	28.6	12.3	7.9	6.1	3.5	55.9	64.9
Colombia	44.6	29.2	12.2	7.4	6.7	3.6	56.2	64.8
Costa Rica	45.3	28.5	9.1	4.2	6.9	3.3	63.0	73.7
Chile	36.4	22.0	11.8	6.6	5.1	2.5	58.0	70.7
Cuba	35.3	18.2	8.8	6.7	4.7	2.0	65.1	74.0
Dominican Republic	47.7	30.9	15.4	7.1	7.3	3.6	52.6	64.6
Ecuador	45.6	35.4	14.3	7.6	6.9	4.6	54.7	65.4
El Salvador	47.4	37.9	15.3	7.0	6.8	5.1	52.3	67.1
Guatemala	47.8	40.8	18.3	8.9	6.8	5.8	47.0	62.0
Guyana	40.4	24.8	8.6	5.4	6.0	2.7	61.2	69.8
Haiti	44.4	40.8	21.6	12.8	6.1	5.6	43.6	54.7
Honduras	50.9	39.4	17.7	8.4	7.4	5.6	47.9	62.6
Jamaica	39.6	26.0	9.1	5.5	5.5	2.9	64.3	73.8
Mexico	44.9	31.2	11.3	6.5	6.7	4.0	58.6	67.2
Nicaragua	50.3	41.8	17.1	8.0	7.3	5.5	48.5	63.3
Panama	40.8	26.7	9.6	5.2	5.9	3.1	62.0	72.1
Paraguay	42.2	34.3	11.9	6.8	6.6	4.5	56.6	66.1
Peru	46.3	34.3	17.6	9.2	6.9	4.5	49.1	61.4
Surinam	44.4	25.9	10.3	6.1	6.6	3.0	61.5	69.6
Trinidad & Tobago	38.0	24.0	7.7	6.5	5.0	2.7	64.8	70.2
Uruguay	21.9	18.9	9.6	10.2	2.9	2.6	68.4	71.0
Venezuela	44.2	30.7	9.1	5.4	6.5	3.8	61.0	69.7
Latin America	41.6	30.2	12.7	7.6	6.0	3.8	57.0	67.0
Canada	25.3	14.9	7.7	7.6	3.6	1.8	71.4	76.3
Fed. Rep. of Germany	18.0	10.6	11.4	12.4	2.5	1.4	70.0	74.5
France	18.0	13.7	11.2	10.6	2.9	1.8	71.0	75.2
Italy	18.8	11.6	9.8	10.7	2.5	1.6	69.9	75.2
Japan	17.2	12.3	7.3	7.2	2.0	1.8	69.0	77.2
Spain	21.5	15.1	8.8	8.9	2.9	2.0	70.2	75.0
United States	22.6	15.7	9.4	9.0	3.3	1.9	70.0	75.0
Average Selected Countries	20.2	13.4	9.4	9.5	2.8	1.8	70.2	75.5

Source: United Nations. World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1950-2025, New York, 1988.

Table 4

Urban and Rural Population by Countries 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1987

(Thousands of persons)

Country	1960 Urban	1960 Rural	1960 % Urban	1970 Urban	1970 Rural	1970 % Urban	1980 Urban	1980 Rural	1980 % Urban	1987 Urban	1987 Rural	1987 % Urban	Urban Population Growth Rates (Percentages) 1961-70	1971-80	1981-87
Argentina	15,172	5,444	73.6	18,796	5,166	78.4	23,434	4,803	83.0	26,879	4,258	86.3	2.2	2.2	2.0
Bahamas	79	34	69.9	98	73	57.3	123	87	58.6	143	88	61.9	2.2	2.3	2.2
Barbados	144	87	62.3	154	85	64.4	189	65	74.4	224	46	83.0	0.7	2.1	2.5
Bolivia	887	2,541	25.9	1,652	2,673	38.2	2,489	3,081	44.7	3,340	3,390	49.6	6.4	4.2	4.3
Brazil	33,068	39,526	45.6	53,531	42,316	55.9	81,565	39,721	67.3	102,129	39,323	72.2	4.9	4.3	4.3
Colombia	7,467	8,071	48.1	12,328	8,475	59.3	17,107	8,687	66.3	21,203	8,739	70.8	5.1	3.3	3.1
Costa Rica	410	826	33.2	672	1,059	38.8	1,026	1,258	44.9	1,385	1,406	49.6	5.1	4.3	4.4
Chile	5,021	2,593	65.9	7,135	2,369	75.1	8,935	2,210	80.2	10,403	2,133	83.0	3.6	2.3	2.2
Dominican Republic	1,138	2,093	35.2	1,735	2,688	39.2	2,904	2,793	51.0	4,001	2,715	59.6	4.3	5.3	4.7
Ecuador	1,515	2,898	34.3	2,393	3,658	39.5	3,825	4,298	47.1	5,281	4,642	53.2	4.7	4.8	4.7
El Salvador	935	1,635	36.4	1,416	2,172	39.5	1,999	2,526	44.2	2,353	2,581	47.7	4.2	3.5	2.4
Guatemala	1,347	2,617	34.0	1,803	3,443	34.4	2,536	4,381	36.7	3,226	5,208	38.2	3.0	3.5	3.5
Guyana	160	409	28.1	167	542	23.6	203	662	23.5	265	723	26.8	0.4	2.0	3.9
Haiti	388	3,287	10.6	889	3,611	19.8	1,248	4,165	23.1	1,590	4,557	25.9	8.6	3.5	3.5
Honduras	436	1,499	22.5	736	1,891	28.0	1,314	2,348	35.9	1,937	2,742	41.4	5.4	6.0	5.7
Jamaica	381	1,248	23.4	789	1,080	42.2	954	1,216	44.0	1,187	1,204	49.6	7.6	1.9	3.2
México	19,296	18,72[illegible]	50.8	31,135	21,636	59.0	46,052	24,364	65.4	57,827	25,212	69.6	4.9	4.0	3.3
Nicaragua	622	871	41.7	965	1,088	47.0	1,492	1,279	53.8	2,054	1,447	58.7	4.5	4.5	4.7
Panama	441	664	39.9	707	780	47.5	964	992	49.3	1,148	1,126	50.5	4.8	3.1	2.5
Paraguay	603	1,170	34.0	871	1,480	37.0	1,215	1,932	38.6	1,593	2,329	40.6	3.7	3.4	3.9
Peru	4,630	5,301	46.6	7,660	5,533	58.1	11,109	6,186	64.2	14,165	6,562	68.3	5.2	3.8	3.5
Suriname	137	153	47.2	218	154	58.6	220	132	62.5	231	126	64.7	4.8	0.1	0.7
Trinidad & Tobago	303	540	35.9	502	525	48.9	555	513	52.0	593	551	51.8	5.2	1.0	1.0
Uruguay	1,947	591	76.7	2,301	507	81.9	2,437	471	83.8	2,597	460	85.0	1.7	0.6	0.9
Venezuela	5,104	2,398	68.0	7,617	2,987	71.8	11,409	3,615	75.9	14,338	3,934	78.5	4.1	4.1	3.3

Source: Inter-American Development Bank. Economic and Social Progress in Latin America, 1988 Report, Washington, 1988

Table 5

Metropolitan Areas and their Classification among Cities with more than two Million Inhabitants in 1985. Population and Average Growth Rate, 1970-2000

Rank in 1985	Metropolitan Area	Population (millions)			Average Growth Rate (Annual Percentage)	
		1970	1985	2000	1970-1985	1985-2000
1	Tokyo	14.91	18.82	20.22	1.55	0.48
2	Mexico City	9.12	17.30	25.82	4.27	2.67
3	Sao Paulo	8.22	15.88	23.97	4.39	2.75
4	New York	16.29	15.64	15.78	0.27	0.06
5	Shangai	11.41	11.96	14.30	0.31	1.19
6	Calcutta	7.12	10.95	16.53	2.88	2.75
7	Buenos Aires	8.55	10.88	13.18	1.61	1.28
8	Rio de Janeiro	7.17	10.37	13.26	2.46	1.64
9	London	10.59	10.36	10.51	0.14	0.09
10	Seoul	5.42	10.28	13.77	4.27	1.95
11	Greater Bombay	5.98	10.07	16.00	z 3.47	3.09
12	Los Angeles	8.43	10.05	10.99	1.17	0.60
13	Osaka/Kobe	7.61	9.45	10.49	1.44	0.70
14	Beijing	8.29	9.25	11.17	0.73	1.25
15	Moscow	7.07	8.97	10.40	1.58	0.99
16	Paris	8.34	8.68	8.72	0.26	0.03
17	Jakarta	4.48	7.94	13.25	3.81	3.42
18	Tianjin	6.87	7.89	9.70	0.93	1.37
19	Cairo/Giza	5.69	7.69	11.13	2.01	2.47
20	Teheran	3.29	7.52	13.58	5.51	3.94
27	Lima-Callao	2.92	5.68	9.14	4.43	3.17
33	Bogota	2.37	4.49	6.53	4.24	2.51
36	Santiago	3.01	4.16	5.26	2.16	1.58
43	Caracas	2.12	3.74	5.03	3.78	1.98
64	Guadalajara	1.58	2.77	4.11	3.74	2.65
65	Porto Alegre	1.55	2.74	4.02	3.80	2.55
80	Monterrey	1.28	2.53	3.97	4.53	2.99
87	El Salvador	1.16	2.24	3.45	4.36	2.90

Source: United Nations. The Prospects of World Urbanization.
Revised as of 1984-85, New York, 1987.

Table 6

Gross Domestic Product, Total and Per Capita, by Country, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1987

	Per capita (1986 dollars)			Total (Millions 1986 dollars)				
Country	**1960**	**1970**	**1980**	**1987**	**1960**	**1970**	**1980**	**1987**
Argentina	46,194	69,317	89,261	85,482	2,241	2,893	3,161	2,745
Bahamas	886	1,704	2,072	2,409	7,841	9,965	9,867	10,430
Barbados	429	783	922	954	1,857	3,276	3,631	3,532
Bolivia	2,166	3,521	5,448	4,853	632	814	978	721
Brazil	68,294	123,844	284,769	343,463	941	1,292	2,348	2,428
Colombia	13,406	22,329	38,179	47,342	863	1,073	1,480	1,581
Costa Rica	1,646	2,932	5,075	5,611	1,332	1,694	2,222	2,011
Chile	13,035	19,723	25,321	27,745	1,712	2,075	2,272	2,213
Dominican Republic	2,468	4,050	7,917	9,408	764	916	1,390	1,401
Ecuador	3,157	5,078	11,916	13,154	715	839	1,467	1,326
El Salvador	1,985	3,437	4,723	4,440	772	958	1,044	900
Guatemala	4,045	6,911	11,978	11,604	1,020	1,317	1,732	1,376
Guyana	532	752	842	661	935	1,061	973	669
Haiti	1,127	1,221	1,941	1,844	307	271	359	300
Honduras	1,112	1,905	3,243	3,657	575	725	886	782
Jamaica	2,435	4,102	3,788	4,073	1,495	2,195	1,746	1,704
Mexico	50,287	99,049	187,689	201,244	1,323	1,877	2,665	2,423
Nicaragua	1,461	2,849	2,950	3,079	979	1,388	1,065	879
Panama	1,297	2,784	4,759	5,797	1,173	1,872	2,433	2,549
Paraguay	1,282	2,031	4,709	5,497	723	864	1,496	1,402
Peru	11,369	19,030	27,553	31,444	1,145	1,442	1,593	1,517
Suriname	492	1,040	1,201	1,163	1,697	2,797	3,413	3,257
Trinidad & Tobago	1,778	2,644	4,420	3,318	2,109	2,574	4,139	2,900
Uruguay	5,539	6,459	8,694	8,356	2,182	2,300	2,990	2,733
Venezuela	27,008	48,627	72,850	75,041	3,600	4,586	4,849	4,107
Latin America	263,438	456,131	812,234	901,650	1,274	1,675	2,340	2,223

Source: Inter-American Development Bank. Economic and Social Progress in Latin America, 1988 Report, Washington, 1988.

Table 7

Latin America: Gross Domestic Product by Type of Expenditure and Sector of Origin, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1983, 1985, 1987 • (Millions of 1986 dollars)

	1960	1970	1980	1983	1985	1987
Type of Expenditure						
Consumption	205,932	342,123	640,634	626,257	657,059	711,026
Investment	47,830	95,679	192,367	122,209	132,455	140,905
Exports (1)	45,919	80,429	116,720	131,993	148,588	154,454
Imports (1)	(37,134)	(63,813)	(139,558)	(93,293)	(94,719)	(107,091)
Sector of Origin						
Primary Sector	58,297	81,886	115,356	120,227	129,003	132,801
Agriculture	43,317	60,195	84,779	88,843	95,784	99,430
Mining	14,979	21,691	30,577	31,384	33,218	33,371
Secondary Sector	71,126	133,108	253,517	225,301	244,156	265,165
Manufacturing	53,380	102,431	189,882	169,428	185,729	201,581
Construction	15,775	25,345	50,635	40,738	41,058	44,241
Electricity, Gas and Water	1,972	5,332	13,000	15,134	17,369	19,343
Terciary Sector	125,091	226,257	422,058	424,181	452,107	481,605
Commerce	47,651	82,424	144,490	135,898	143,190	148,816
Transportation & Communications	13,791	23,998	50,477	50,620	53,616	58,008
Finance	28,250	55,916	91,360	96,182	105,406	114,565
Public Administration	11,408	18,698	49,345	52,779	54,878	55,905
Other Services	23,991	45,221	86,386	88,702	95,017	104,311
Gross Domestic Product (2)	262,547	454,419	810,163	787,166	843,383	899,295
Residual (3) (Indirect taxes + Discrepancy)	8,033	13,167	20,270	17,457	18,117	19,727

(1) Goods and non-factor services

(2) Bahamas

(3) Differences among GDP calculated by expenditures and by sector of origin will occur as some countries calculate the components of value added at factor costs whereas expenditures are always calculated at market prices. This produces the need for a residual component in the overall results.

Source: Inter-American Development Bank. Economic and Social Progress in Latin America, 1988 Report, Washington, 1988.

Table 8

Agricultural Production, Grain Imports and Grain Food Assistance by Country, 1970, 1974, 1985, 1986

Country	Value added by Agriculture (million of dollars)		Grain Imports (thousands of metric tons)		Food Assistance in Grains - (thousands of metric tons)		Average Production of Food per capita (1979-81=100)
	1970	1986	1974	1986	1974/75	1985/86	1984-86
Argentina	2,438	8,867	0	1	n.a	n.a.	99
Bolivia	202	1,016	209	529	22	293	93
Brazil	4,401	22,940	2,485	5,940	31	6	106
Colombia	1,887	5,846	503	909	28	6	96
Costa Rica	222	883	110	152	1	119	92
Chile	558	n.a.	1,737	264	323	10	101
Dominican Republic	282	910	252	545	16	125	100
Ecuador	401	1,704	152	288	13	5	100
El Salvador	292	807	75	212	4	278	90
Guatemala	n.a.	n.a.	138	242	9	53	97
Haiti	n.a.	n.a.	83	196	25	133	96
Honduras	212	804	52	122	31	135	86
Jamaica	93	149	340	364	1	203	103
Mexico	4,330	11,467	2,881	2,710	n.a.	11	957
Nicaragua	193	649	44	122	3	41	76
Panama	149	479	63	113	3	0	98
Paraguay	191	964	71	25	10	4	106
Peru	1,409	1,824	637	1,767	37	180	100
Trinidad & Tobago	40	262	208	243	n.a.	n.a.	92
Uruguay	268	614	70	131	6	0	101
Venezuela	826	4,471	1,270	1,694	n.a.	n.a.	93

Source: Banco Mundial. Informe sobre el Desarrollo Mundial 1988, Washington, 1988.

Table 9

Official Exchange Rate by Country, 1960, 1970, 1975, 1980-1988

(National Currency Units per U.S. Dollars. Annual Average.)

Country	Currency	1960	1970	1975	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Argentina (1)	Austral	0.80	3.80	36.60	1,837.20	4,402.70	25,923.00	10.53	67.60	0.60	0.94	2.14	8.75
Bolivia (2)	Boliviano	11.88	11.88	20.00	24.51	24.51	64.12	229.77	174.21	0.44	1.92	2.05	2.35
Brazil (3)	Cruzado	0.19	4.59	8.13	52.71	93.13	179.51	577.04	848.03	6,204.90	13.66	39.23	262.38
Colombia	Peso	6.63	18.44	30.92	47.28	54.49	64.08	78.85	100.82	142.31	194.26	242.61	299.20
CostaRica	Colon	5.61	6.62	8.57	8.57	21.76	37.40	41.09	44.53	50.45	55.98	62.77	75.80
Chile (4)	Peso	1.05	12.00	4.91	39.00	39.00	50.91	78.84	98.66	161.08	193.02	219.54	245.05
Dominican Rep	Peso	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.11	2.90	3.84	6.13
Ecuador	Sucre	15.00	20.91	25.00	25.00	25.00	30.03	44.12	62.54	69.56	122.78	170.46	301.61
El Salvador	Colon	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	5.00	5.00	5.00
Guatemala	Quetzal	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.87	2.50	2.61
Guyana	Dollar	1.71	2.00	2.35	2.55	2.81	3.00	3.00	3.83	4.25	4.27	9.75	10.00
Haiti	Gourdes G	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Honduras	Lempira	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Mexico	Peso	12.50	12.50	12.50	22.95	24.51	56.40	120.10	167.80	256.90	611.80	1,378.20	2,273.10
Nicaragua	Cordoba	7.00	7.00	7.02	10.05	10.05	10.05	10.05	10.05	26.50	67.00	70.00	n.a.
Panama	Balboa	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Paraguay	Guarani	116.33	126.00	126.00	126.00	126.00	126.00	126.00	201.00	306.67	339.17	550.00	550.00
Peru (5)	Inti	27.42	38.70	40.80	288.65	422.85	697.57	1,630.00	3,467.00	10.97	13.94	16.83	128.83
Trinidad	TT Dollar	1.71	2.00	2.16	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.45	3.60	3.60	3.84
Uruguay (6)	Nuevo Peso	11.29	250.00	2.30	9.16	10.87	13.91	34.54	56.12	101.43	151.99	226.67	359.44
Venezuela	Bolivar	3.35	4.49	4.28	4.29	4.29	4.29	4.29	7.01	7.50	8.08	14.50	14.50

(1) In 1983 the Argentine Peso went into circulation, as the equivalent of 10,000 former units. In 1985, the Austral went into circulation, equal to 1,000 Argentine Pesos.

(2) In 1985, the Boliviano went into circulation, equal to 1,000 former units.

(3) In 1986, the Cruzado went into circulation, equal to 1,000 Cruceiros.

(4) In 1974, parity with the U.S. Dollar was declared.

(5) In 1985, the Inti went into circulation equivalent to 1,000 Soles.

(6) In 1974, the New Peso went into circulation, equivalent to 1,000 Pesos.

Sources: 1960 to 1981: International Monetary Fund. International Financial Statistics, Yearbook 1982. Washington, 1982.
1982 to 1988: International Monetary Fund. International Financial Statistics, Vol. XLII, N. 4, April 1989, Washington.

Table 10.

Rate of Growth of the Real Wages by Country, 1981 - 1987

Country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Argentina	-10.7	-10.5	24.1	27.1	-12.2	-5.7	-7.6
Barbados	-4.1	0.0	0.0	5.4	-.8	3.4	1.9
Bolivia	-6.4	-1.5	10.5	39.1	-45.6	-39.2	35.0
Brazil	-1.3	0.5	-11.4	-14.8	12.2	0.1	-27.5
Colombia	2.0	5.0	6.1	6.0	-3.0	2.5	-1.9
Costa Rica	-9.1	-19.9	11.4	7.8	9.1	7.5	-1.8
Chile	8.9	-0.2	-11.0	0.3	-4.5	2.0	0.5
Dominican Republic	-7.4	-6.9	-4.1	-3.2	0.9	3.8	-5.9
Ecuador	-12.8	-2.7	-18.4	3.5	-0.3	3.9	-7.7
El Salvador	-7.8	-10.7	-12.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Guatemala	17.7	6.0	-7.3	-0.7	-13.6	-17.9	8.6
Haiti	n.a.	n.a.	-7.8	-7.2	4.6	-7.9	n.a.
Honduras	15.2	-9.1	-8.5	-4.7	-4.7	-4.4	n.a.
Mexico	1.6	-9.6	-18.0	-7.4	-1.3	-7.9	-6.3
Nicaragua	1.5	-12.7	-12.7	-5.1	-14,3	n.a.	n.a.
Panama	-2.3	0.3	2.8	2.0	4.1	0.7	-0.4
Paraguay	5.3	-2.8	-7.1	-3.6	-2.1	-4.3	12.3
Peru	-1.7	2.2	-2.3	-8.9	-12.4	15.5	7.4
Surinam	6.0	8.5	6.3	5.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Trinidad & Tobago	2.4	18.4	5.7	-0.2	-2.8	-5.5	-7.1
Uruguay	7.5	-0.3	-20.7	-9.1	14.1	6.7	4.7
Venezuela	-5.4	-0.1	-7.2	-7.6	0.3	n.a.	n.a.

Sources: Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo. Progreso Economico y Social en America Latina, Informe 1986, Washington, 1986.
Inter-American Development Bank. Economic and Social Progress in Latin America, 1988 Report, Washington, 1988.

Table 11

Variations in the Consumer Price Index, by Country, 1981-1988.

(Variations December to December)

Country	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Argentina	131.2	209.7	433.7	688.0	385.4	81.9	174.8	372.0
Barbados	12.3	6.9	5.5	5.1	2.4	-0.5	6.3	4.3
Bolivia	25.2	296.5	328.5	2,177.2	8,170.5	66.0	10.7	20.9
Brazil	91.2	97.9	179.2	203.3	228.0	58.4	365.9	816.1
Colombia	27.5	24.1	16.5	18.3	22.3	21.0	24.0	27.7
Costa Rica	65.1	81.7	10.7	17.3	11.1	15.4	16.4	23.2
Chile	9.5	20.7	23.6	23.0	26.4	17.4	21.5	10.9
Dominican Republic	7.3	7.2	7.7	38.1	28.4	6.5	25.0	57.3
Ecuador	17.9	24.3	52.5	25.1	24.4	27.3	32.5	80.5
El Salvador	11.6	13.8	15.5	9.8	30.8	30.3	19.6	18.0
Guatemala	8.7	-2.0	15.4	5.2	31.5	25.7	10.1	13.4
Guyana	29.0	19.3	9.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Haiti	16.4	4.9	11.2	5.4	17.4	-11.4	-4.1	8.3
Honduras	9.2	8.8	7.2	3.7	4.2	3.2	2.7	6.6
Jamaica	4.8	7.0	16.7	31.2	23.9	10.4	8.4	7.7
Mexico	28.7	98.8	80.8	59.2	63.7	105.7	159.2	70.5
Nicaragua	23.2	22.2	32.9	50.2	334.3	747.4	1,347.4	7,778.4
Panama	4.8	3.7	2.0	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.2
Paraguay	15.0	4.2	14.1	29.8	23.1	24.1	32.0	16.8
Peru	72.7	72.9	125.1	111.5	158.3	62.9	114.5	1,307.1
Trinidad & Tobago	11.6	10.8	15.4	14.1	6.6	9.9	8.3	6.0
Uruguay	29.4	20.5	51.5	66.1	83.0	76.4	57.3	68.5
Venezuela	11.0	7.3	7.0	18.3	5.7	12.3	40.3	31.2
Latin America	57.5	84.6	130.8	184.8	274.7	64.5	198.9	472.8

Source: CEPAL, Naciones Unidas. Notas sobre la Economía y el Desarrollo, No. 470/471, Diciembre de 1988.

Table 12

Comparative Data by Occupation and Growth of the Labor Force in Latin America and Selected Countries, 1965, 1980, 1985, 2000

	Percentage of the population in working age (15 to 64 years)		Percentage of the labor force occupied in: Agriculture		Industry		Services		Average annual growth of the labor force (percentages)		
Country	**1965**	**1985**	**1965**	**1980**	**1965**	**1980**	**1965**	**1980**	**1965-80**	**1980-85**	**1985-2000**
Argentina	63	60	18	13	34	34	48	53	1.1	1.1	1.5
Bolivia	53	53	54	46	20	20	26	34	2.0	2.7	2.7
Brazil	53	59	49	31	20	27	31	42	3.3	2.3	2.1
Colombia	49	59	45	34	21	24	34	42	2.6	2.8	2.3
Costa Rica	49	59	47	31	19	23	34	46	3.8	3.1	2.4
Cuba	59	66	33	24	25	29	41	48	2.3	2.3	1.7
Chile	56	63	27	17	29	25	44	58	2.2	2.6	1.7
Dominican Republic	47	53	59	46	14	15	27	39	2.8	3.5	2.9
Ecuador	50	53	55	39	19	20	26	42	2.7	3.1	2.9
El Salvador	50	60	59	43	16	19	26	37	3.3	2.9	3.3
Guatemala	50	53	64	57	15	17	21	26	2.3	2.8	3.3
Haiti	52	51	77	70	7	8	16	22	1.0	2.0	2.2
Honduras	50	50	68	61	12	16	20	23	2.8	3.9	3.9
Jamaica	51	56	37	31	20	16	43	52	2.0	2.9	2.4
Mexico	49	54	50	37	22	29	29	35	3.9	3.2	3.0
Nicaragua	48	50	57	47	16	16	28	38	2.9	3.8	3.9
Panama	51	58	46	32	16	18	38	50	2.7	3.0	2.6
Paraguay	49	51	55	49	20	21	26	31	3.2	3.1	2.8
Peru	51	56	50	40	19	18	32	42	2.9	2.9	2.8
Trinidad & Tobago	53	61	20	10	35	39	45	51	1.9	2.5	2.1
Uruguay	63	63	20	16	29	29	51	55	0.4	0.6	0.9
Venezuela	49	56	30	16	24	28	47	56	4.2	3.5	3.0
Latin America	52	57	46	36	21	22	33	42	2.6	2.7	2.6
Selected Countries:											
Canada	59	68	10	5	33	29	57	65	3.2	1.4	0.9
Fed. Rep. of Germany	65	70	11	6	48	44	41	50	0.3	0.7	-0.5
France	62	66	18	9	39	35	43	56	0.8	0.9	0.5
Italy	66	67	25	12	42	41	34	48	0.3	0.7	0.2
Japan	67	68	26	11	32	34	42	55	1.0	0.9	0.5
Spain	64	65	34	17	35	37	32	46	0.6	1.3	0.8
United States	60	66	5	4	35	31	60	66	2.2	1.2	0.8
Average Selected Countries	63	67	18	9	38	36	44	55	1.2	1.0	0.5

Source: Banco Mundial. Informe sobre el Desarrollo Mundial, 1988, Washington, 1988

Table 13.
Disbursed Total External Debt (1), by Countries, 1983-1988

	Year end balances (millions of dollars)						Annual growth rates				
Country	**1983**	**1984**	**1985**	**1986**	**1987**	**1988(2)**	**1979-81**	**1982-83**	**1984-86**	**1987**	**1988 (2)**
Argentina	45,069	46,903	48,312	51,400	54,700	56,800	42.1	12.8	4.5	6.4	3.8
Bolivia (3)	3,265	3,272	3,287	3,636	4,215	3,930	15.8	7.7	3.7	15.9	-6.8
Brazil	98,175	105,275	106,731	111,045	121,264	114,600	14.4	10.8	4.2	9.2	-5.5
Colombia	11,458	12,350	14,063	14,987	15,651	15,900	28.0	16.1	9.3	4.4	1.6
Costa Rica	3,532	3,752	3,742	3,791	3,914	4,100	13.3	14.7	2.4	3.2	4.8
Chile	18,037	19,659	20,403	20,716	20,551	19,100	30.7	7.6	4.7	-0.8	-7.1
Dominican Republic	3,313	3,536	3,690	3,525	3,680	3,840	24.4	14.0	2.1	4.4	4.3
Ecuador	6,908	7,198	7,772	8,624	9,900	10,500	25.5	8.5	7.7	14.8	6.1
El Salvador	1,890	1,949	1,980	1,928	1,876	1,850	19.1	8.4	0.7	-2.7	-1.4
Guatemala	2,149	2,505	2,695	2,668	2,718	2,840	19.3	24.8	7.5	1.9	4.5
Haiti	551	607	600	697	741	800	21.1	22.3	8.2	6.3	8.0
Honduras	2,162	2,392	2,794	3,018	3,101	3,230	17.8	17.0	11.8	2.8	4.2
Mexico	93,800	96,700	97,800	100,500	102,350	96,700	30.8	12.0	2.3	1.8	-5.5
Nicaragua (3)	3,788	4,362	4,936	5,760	6,270	6,700	27.4	21.5	15.0	8.9	6.9
Panama (3)	3,392	3,644	3,642	3,835	3,950	4,170	7.5	20.6	4.2	3.0	5.6
Paraguay	1,469	1,654	1,773	1,855	2,043	2,150	12.4	24.4	8.1	10.1	5.2
Peru	12,445	13,338	13,721	14,477	15,441	16,200	1.0	14.0	5.2	6.7	4.9
Uruguay	4,572	4,671	4,900	5,238	5,888	6,050	36.1	22.0	4.6	12.4	2.8
Venezuela	36,208	36,081	33,826	31,636	32,252	31,900	27.5	4.1	-4.4	1.9	-1.1
Latin America	352,183	369,848	376,667	389,336	410,505	401,360	23.3	11.0	3.4	5.4	-2.2

(1) Includes debt with the IMF
(2) Preliminary figures
(3) Public debt

Source: CEPAL, Naciones Unidas. Notas sobre la Economía y el Desarrollo, No. 470/471, Diciembre de 1988.

Table 14

Health and Nutrition Comparative Indicators in Latin America and Selected Countries, 1965-1985

	Number of inhabitants per: Physician		Nurse		Daily intake of calories per capita		Children born with less than average weight %	Child mortality rate Less than one-year olds (/1000 born alive)	
Country	1965	1981	1965	1981	1965	1985	1984	1965	1985
Argentina	600	n.a.	610	n.a.	3,209	3,216	6	58	34
Bolivia	3,300	2,000	3,990	n.a.	1,868	2,171	10	160	117
Brazil	2,500	1,300	1,550	1,140	2,405	2,657	9	104	67
Colombia	2,500	n.a.	890	n.a.	2,174	2,588	10	96	48
Costa Rica	2,010	1,440	630	n.a.	2,366	2,807	10	72	19
Cuba	1,150	720	820	370	2,371	3,088	8	38	16
Chile	2,100	1,930	600	450	2,591	2,544	7	107	22
Dominican Republic	1,700	1,400	1,640	1,240	1,870	2,530	15	102	70
Ecuador	3,000	n.a.	2,320	n.a.	1,942	2,005	n.a.	112	67
El Salvador	n.a.	2,550	1,300	n.a.	1,859	2,155	9	120	65
Guatemala	3,690	n.a.	8,250	1,360	2,028	2,345	10	112	65
Haiti	14,010	9,200	12,900	n.a.	2,007	1,784	17	158	123
Honduras	5,370	3,100	1,530	690	1,963	2,224	9	128	76
Jamaica	1,990	2,830	340	550	2,232	2,578	10	49	20
Mexico	2,080	1,210	980	n.a.	2,643	3,126	15	82	50
Nicaragua	2,560	2,230	1,390	590	2,398	2,464	15	121	69
Panama	2,130	1,010	680	n.a.	2,255	2,423	8	56	25
Paraguay	1,850	1,750	1,550	650	2,627	2,873	7	60	43
Peru	1,650	1,440	900	1,010	2,324	2,120	9	131	94
Trinidad & Tobago	3,810	1,500	560	390	2,497	2,915	n.a.	42	22
Uruguay	880	500	590	190	2,811	2,791	8	47	29
Venezuela	1,210	1,000	560	n.a.	2,321	2,485	9	65	37
Average: Latin America	2,861	2,062	2,026	719	2,307	2,540	10	92	54
Selected Countries:									
Canada	770	550	190	120	3,289	3,443	6	23	8
Fed. Rep. of Germany	640	420	500	170	3,143	3,519	6	24	10
France	830	460	380	110	3,303	3,358	5	22	8
Italy	1,850	750	790	250	3,113	3,493	7	36	12
Japan	970	740	410	210	2,669	2,695	5	18	6
Spain	800	360	1,220	280	2,844	3,303	1	38	10
United States	670	500	310	180	3,292	3,682	7	22	11
Average: Selected Countries	933	540	543	189	3,093	3,356	5	26	9

Source: Banco Mundial. Informe sobre el Desarrollo Mundial, 1987 y 1988, Washington, 1987, 1988.

Table 15

Comparative Data on School Enrollment of the Population of Latin America and Selected Countries, 1985

Number and Percentage of Age Groups Registered in the Educational System by Level of Education

	Elementary (1)			Secondary			Higher		
Country	**6-11 years of age (000)**	**%**	**(000)**	**12-17 years of age (000)**	**%**	**(000)**	**18-24 years of age (000)**	**%**	**(000)**
Argentina	3,815	108	4,120	3,192	70	2,234	2,842	36	1,023
Bolivia	1,074	91	977	882	37	326	722	20	144
Brazil	19,457	104	20,235	17,475	35	6,116	16,625	11	1,829
Colombia	4,188	117	4,900	3,843	50	1,921	3,808	13	495
Costa Rica	374	101	378	328	41	134	341	23	78
Cuba	959	105	1,007	1,338	85	1,137	1,387	21	291
Chile	1,379	109	1,503	1,469	69	1,014	1,480	16	237
Dominican Republic	972	124	1,205	978	50	489	833	n.a.	n.a.
Ecuador	1,523	114	1,736	1,348	55	741	1,150	33	380
El Salvador	971	70	680	798	24	192	662	14	93
Guatemala	1,430	76	1,087	1,147	17	195	923	8	74
Haiti	1,112	78	867	936	18	168	775	1	8
Honduras	803	102	819	649	36	234	52	517	10
Jamaica	327	106	347	339	58	197	347	n.a.	n.a.
Mexico	13,204	115	15,185	12,182	55	6,700	9,901	16	1,584
Nicaragua	590	101	596	487	39	190	392	10	39
Panama	324	105	340	311	59	183	269	26	70
Paraguay	600	101	606	513	31	159	450	10	45
Peru	3,093	122	3,773	2,757	65	1,792	2,399	24	576
Trinidad & Tobago	153	95	145	145	76	110	155	4	6
Uruguay	323	110	355	309	70	216	291	32	93
Venezuela	2,693	108	2,908	2,352	45	1,058	2,141	26	557
Latin America	59,364	103	61,037	53,778	49	26,522	48,410	18	8,569
Selected Countries:									
Canada	2,152	105	2,260	2,167	103	2,232	2,566	55	1,411
Fed. Rep. of Germany	3,537	96	3,396	4,572	74	3,383	6,209	30	1,863
France	4,466	114	5,091	4,977	96	4,778	5,070	30	1,521
Italy	4,469	98	4,380	5,308	75	3,981	5,532	26	1,438
Japan	10,502	102	10,712	11,758	96	11,288	10,232	30	3,070
Spain	4,016	104	4,177	3,946	91	3,591	3,894	27	1,051
United States	22,074	101	22,295	22,740	99	22,513	26,504	57	15,107
Average Selected Countries	51,216	103	52,309	55,468	91	51,765	60,007	36	25,461

(1)In the statistics given for registration at the Elementary Level there appears enrollment beyond the school age population between 6 and 11 years of age. This discrepancy occurs because data from the countries includes the number of persons registered regardless of age.

Source:Banco Mundial. Informe sobre el Desarrollo Mundial, 1988, Washington, 1988.. United Nations. World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1950-2025, New York, 1988.

Table 16
Percentage of Literacy by Countries
Decades 1950-1980 and 1985

Percentage of the Population 15 years and over

Country	**1950**	**1960**	**1970**	**1980**	**1985 (a)**
Argentina	13.6	8.6	7.4	6.1	4.5
Barbados	8.9	1.8	0.7	n.a.	n.a.
Bolivia	67.9	61.2	36.8	n.a.	25.8
Brazil	50.5	39.7	33.8	25.5	22.3
Colombia	37.7	27.1	19.2	14.8	17.7
Costa Rica	20.6	15.6	11.6	n.a.	6.4
Cuba	22.1	n.a.	n.a.	25.5	n.a.
Chile	19.8	16.4	11.0	8.9	5.6
Dominican Republic	57.1	35.5	33.0	n.a.	22.7
Ecuador	44.3	32.5	25.8	16.5	17.6
El Salvador	60.6	51.0	42.9	38.0	27.9
Guatemala	70.7	62.2	54.0	44.2	45.0
Guyana	24.1	12.9	8.4	n.a.	4.1
Haiti	89.5	85.5	78.7	n.a.	62.4
Honduras	64.8	55.0	43.1	n.a.	40.5
Jamaica	23.0	18.1	3.9	n.a.	n.a.
Mexico	43.2	34.5	25.8	16.0	9.7
Nicaragua	61.6	50.4	42.5	n.a.	13.0
Panama	30.1	23.2	18.7	12.9	11.8
Paraguay	34.2	25.5	19.9	12.3	11,8
Peru	n.a.	38.9	27.5	18.1	15.2
Suriname	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	35.0	10.0
Trinidad & Tobago	26.2	6.6	7.8	n.a.	3.9
Uruguay	n.a.	9.5	6.1	n.a.	4.6
Venezuela	50.5	37.3	23.5	15.3	13.1

(a) UNESCO estimates

Source: CEPAL, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadistico de America Latina y el Caribe, Edicion 1987, Santiago, Chile, 1988.

Table 17

Public Expenditures in Education

Comparative Data by Regions, Five Year Periods: 1975-1985 and 1986

	(In millions of dollars)				(In % of the GDP)				(Dollars per inhabitant)			
Regions	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**	**1986**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**	**1986**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**	**1986**
Europe (Incl. USSR)	143,079	250,294	217,071	281,401	5.7	5.4	5.5	5.4	197	335	283	365
Oceania	6,853	10,205	10,343	11,220	6.0	5.6	5.5	5.6	329	453	426	456
Africa (1)	3,557	10,772	7,699	5,845	3.9	5.2	4.8	4.4	13	33	20	15
Asia (1)	41,423	92,476	104,859	140,663	4.2	4.6	4.3	4.4	19	38	39	52
Arab Countries	8,440	18,080	25,598	26,867	5.9	4.5	6.6	6.7	62	113	138	141
North America	113,288	205,431	290,233	295,717	6.4	6.9	6.7	6.5	474	816	1,101	1,113
Latin America & the Caribbean	13,477	31,397	25,392	24,701	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.5	43	88	63	60
World Total	330,117	618,655	681,195	786,414	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.5	84	144	144	165

(1) Arab countries excluded.

Source: UNESCO, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadístico 1988, Nueva York, 1988.

Table 18

Number of Books Published

Comparative Data by Regions. Decades 1955-1986

Regions	1955 Number of titles	1955 %	1955 Per million of inhabitants	1965 Number of titles	1965 %	1965 Per million of inhabitants	1975 Number of titles	1975 %	1975 Per million of inhabitants	1986 Number of titles	1986 %	1986 Per million of inhabitants
Europe (Incl. USSR)	186,000	69.1	307	260,000	64.7	385	343,000	60.0	471	447,000	54.5	578
Oceania	1,000	0.4	68	5,000	1.2	286	9,000	1.6	428	11,000	1.3	440
Africa (1)	1,600	0.6	10	4,300	1.0	18	8,300	1.2	27	10,000	1.2	23
Asia (1)	53,200	19.8	65	59,700	14.0	58	85,800	15.1	65	186,000	22.7	67
Arab Countries	2,200	0.8	27	4,000	0.9	38	4,900	0.9	35	7,000	0.9	36
North America	14,000	5.2	77	58,000	13.6	271	92,000	16.1	389	106,000	12.9	397
Latin America & the Caribbean	11,000	4.1	60	19,000	4.5	77	29,000	5.1	89	53,000	6.5	129
World Total	269,000	100.0	131	426,000	100.0	168	572,000	100.0	184	819,500	100.0	167

(1) Arab countries excluded.

Source: UNESCO, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadistico 1988, Nueva York, 1988.

Table 19

Comparative Data on the Number of Daily Newspapers and their Circulation by Regions, 1975 - 1984

	Number of newspapers		Total (Millions)		Per 1000 inhabitants	
Regions	**1975**	**1984**	**1975**	**1984**	**1975**	**1984**
Europe (Incl. USSR)	2,380	2,420	220	239	302	312
Oceania	120	110	7	6	308	255
Africa (1)	150	120	4	4	12	10
Asia (1)	2,120	2,500	127	146	55	54
Arab Countries	110	110	3	6	23	35
North America	1,900	1,800	66	69	275	263
Latin America and the Caribbean	1,100	1,170	24	32	75	80
World Total	7,870	8,230	451	502	110	104

(1) Arab countries excluded

Source: UNESCO, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadistico 1988, Nueva York, 1988.

Table 20

Production and Consumption of Newsprint. Comparative Data by Regions • Five Year Periods, 1970-1985

	Production Millions metric tons	Consumption				
		Total mt	Per inhabitant (kg)			
Regions	**1985**	**1985**	**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**
Europe (Incl. USSR)	8.7	7.9	9.6	9.2	9.7	10.3
Oceania	0.7	0.8	28.7	30.4	27.7	33.3
Africa (1)	0.4	0.3	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.7
Asia (1)	3.8	5.2	1.5	1.6	2.1	1.9
Arab Countries	n.a.	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.9
North America	13.9	13.0	42.4	38.0	45.6	49.2
Latin America & the Caribbean	0.8	1.3	3.8	2.7	3.6	3.1
World Total	28.3	28.7	5.8	5.3	5.9	6.0

(1) Arab countries excluded

Source: UNESCO, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadistico 1988, Nueva York, 1988.

Table 21

Number of Radio Broadcasting Stations and Receiving Units
Comparative Data by Regions
Five Year Periods, 1965-1985 and 1986

	Total Number of Broadcasting Stations					Total Number of Receiving Units									
Regions	**1965**	**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**	**1965**	**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**1986**	**1965**	**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**1986**
								(millions)					**(per 1,000 inhabitants)**		
Europe (Incl. USSR)	4,580	8,270	9,280	9,900	10,950	222	283	348	409	523	328	403	478	545	676
Oceania	290	310	330	430	530	3	8	13	19	25	171	421	619	826	1,000
Africa (1)	400	560	580	680	710	6	8	17	31	62	26	30	56	86	142
Asia (1)	1,330	1,830	2,630	2,810	4,070	51	68	132	235	452	27	33	58	93	162
Arab Countries	160	220	250	360	500	6	10	17	28	48	56	81	121	172	247
North América	6,170	6,770	8,530	9,700	10,200	251	306	424	471	532	1,173	1,354	1,797	1,869	1,992
Latin America & the Caribbean	3,470	4,140	4,200	4,600	6,200	34	51	81	100	134	137	180	251	276	327
World Total	16,400	22,100	25,800	28,480	33,160	573	744	1,032	1,293	1,776	170	204	255	292	362

(1) Arab Countries excluded

Fuente: UNESCO, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadistico 1988, Nueva York, 1988.

Table 22

Number of Television Broadcasting and Television Sets
Comparative Data by Regions
Five Year Periods, 1965-1985 and 1986

	Total number of TV broadcasters regularly on the air					Total number of TV sets									
Regions	**1965**	**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**	**1965**	**1970**	**1975** (millions)	**1980**	**1986**	**1965**	**1970**	**1975** (per 1,000 inhabitants)	**1980**	**1986**
Europa (Incl. USSR)	4,200	9,240	16,700	21,000	31,300	81	137	189	232	280	120	195	260	309	362
Oceania	80	230	370	500	1,010	2.4	3.5	5.5	6.6	9	137	184	262	275	360
Africa (1)	55	70	120	160	270	0.1	0.3	0.6	3.5	5.7	0.4	1.1	2.0	9.7	13
Asia (1)	1,070	3,730	6,630	11,100	20,340	24	38	56	89	130	13	18	25	37	45
Arab Countries	75	120	180	310	550	0.9	1.9	3.4	9.7	17	8.4	15	24	60	85
North América	2,820	3,850	4,360	4,700	5,560	76	92	133	166	209	355	407	564	660	783
Latin America & the Caribbean	250	460	640	700	1,540	8	17	27	39	59	32	60	84	108	145
World Total	8,550	17,700	29,000	38,800	60,570	192	290	414	546	710	57	79	102	123	145

(1) Arab Countries excluded

Fuente: UNESCO, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadistico 1988, Nueva York, 1988.

Table 23

Film Production. Comparative Data by Regions
Five Year Periods, 1965-1985

Regions	Film Production				
	1965	**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**
Europe (Incl. USSR)	1,140	1,300	1,250	1,060	970
Oceania	n.a.	15	40	40	40
Africa (1)	n.a.	5	5	15	10
Asia (1)	2,280	2,300	1,990	1,920	2,310
Arab Countries	70	70	105	65	80
North America	200	250	220	300	500
Latin America & the Caribbean	160	230	310	230	240
World Total	3,850	4,170	3,920	3,630	4,150

(1) Arab Countries excluded.

Source: UNESCO, Naciones Unidas. Anuario Estadistico 1988, Nueva York, 1988

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Why the Revolution of Hope?

This book describes how Latin America is self-destructing in anarchy produced by growing poverty, barren ignorance, and all kinds of violence. A climate of anxiety advances gradually over the entire continent as it wallows in despair.

Chapter by chapter, the reader will understand how unkept promises and marginal and half-baked efforts have not solved age-old problems, but instead create mirages and postponements or, what is worse, fresh and even more painful errors. So urgent is the need to take care of economic emergencies, violence and its attending evils, high unemployment, public disturbances and other countless daily problems, that it is impossible to plan ahead for real change toward a profound and positive revolution, The Revolution of Hope.

Where's the real revolution? Where's the real change? This hinges on getting people to participate, really and effectively, in the life of their nation. If this seems a slow approach, the authors of this book feel it is nonetheless sure and irreversible, and will lead not to the enjoyment of the few but to the welfare of the many.

This revolution does not entail changes in government, partisan victories or senseless rebellion with loss of life and property. Neither does it seek vertical acceptance of certain ideologies and systems of government supported by force. It rejects passive resignation which expects miracles from divine providence, from so-called "egalitarian" societies, or from illusions about "redistribution of wealth".

This change is not based on values of monetary currency nor partial material improvements. Money has value only when backed up by general wealth. Its purchasing power depends on the productive capacity of the population and their real participation in supply and demand.

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